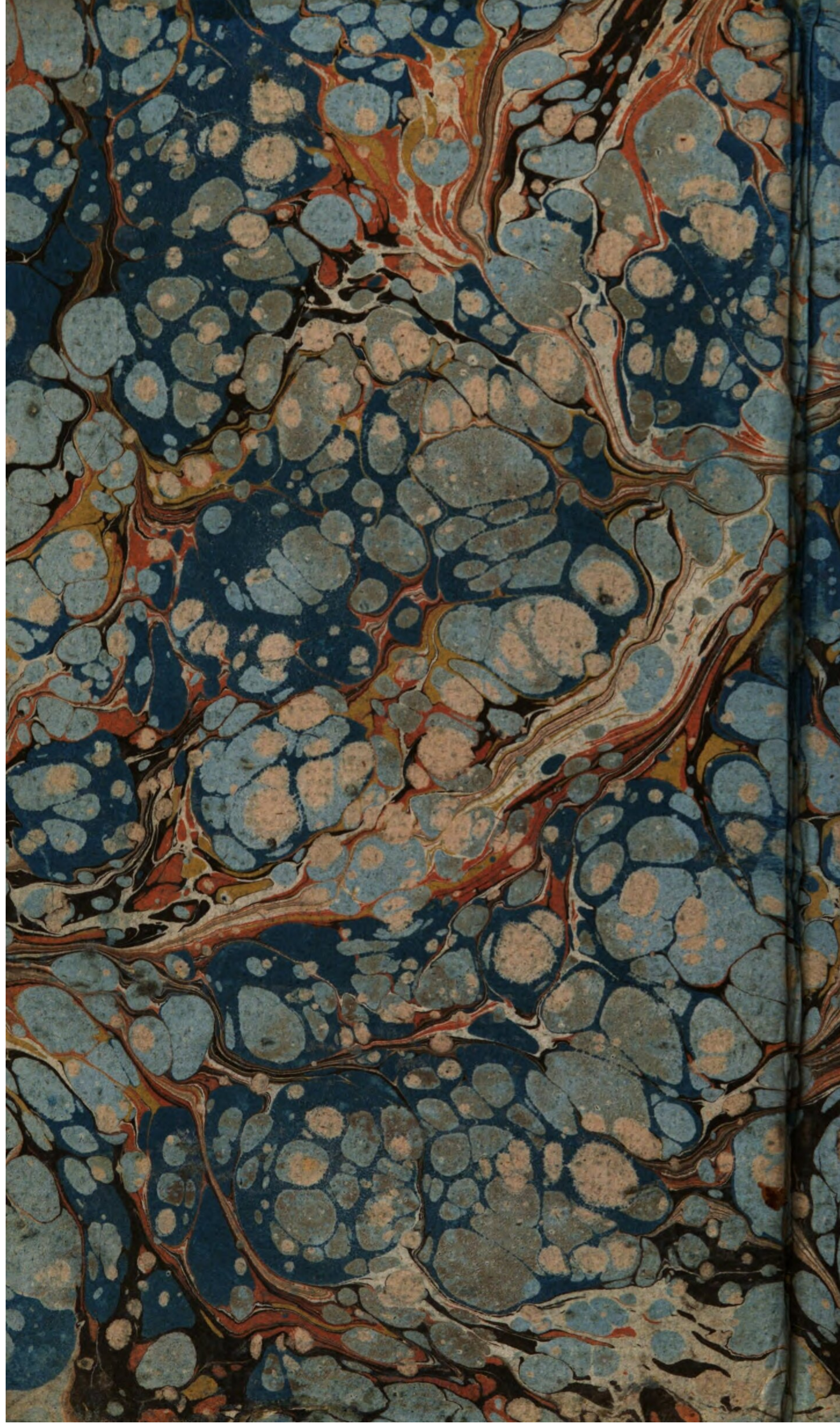
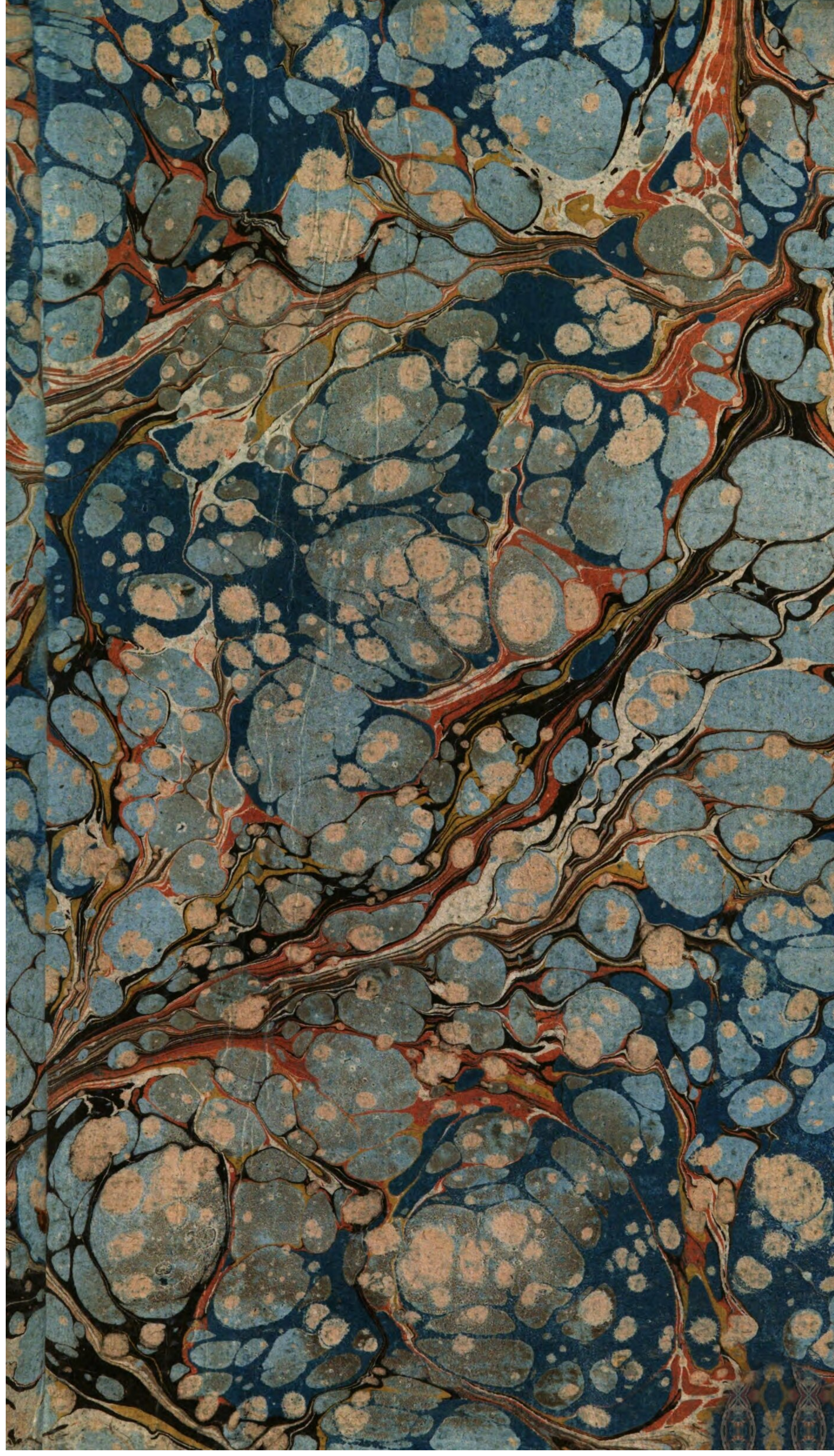














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CHARACTERISTICS  
OF  
MEN, MANNERS, OPINIONS, TIMES,  
WITH  
A COLLECTION OF LETTERS.  
BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
ANTONY EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.



VOL. I.

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BASIL:

Printed for J. J. TOURNEISEN; and J. L. LEGRAND.

M D C C X C.



CHARACTERISTICS

OF

THE MANNERS, OPINIONS, TIMES

WITH

A COLLECTION OF LETTERS

IN THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ANTHONY EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

TO

1794

Printed by J. Baskin, and J. A. Baskin

1794



# C O N T E N T S.

O F   T H E

## F I R S T   V O L U M E.

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T R E A T I S E I.

V I Z.

A

L E T T E R

C O N C E R N I N G

E N T H U S I A S M,

T O

My Lord \* \* \* \* \*

—— *Ridentem dicere verum  
Quid vetat?*

Hor. sat. i.



T R E A T I S E

V I

L A T T E R

C O N C E R N I N G

E W T H U S T A N

E

M Y E S S E

W H I C H

W A S



## P R E F A C E.

**I**f the author of these united tracts had been any friend to Prefaces, he would probably have made his entrance after that manner, in one or other of the five treatises formerly published apart. But as to all prefatory or dedicatory discourse, he has told us his mind sufficiently in that treatise which he calls Soliloquy. Being satisfied, however, that there are many persons who esteem these introductory pieces as very essential in the constitution of a work; he has thought fit, in behalf of his honest printer, to substitute these lines under the title of a Preface; and to declare, “ That,  
“ according to his best judgment and author-  
“ ity, these presents ought to pass, and be re-  
“ ceived, construed, and taken, as satisfactory  
“ in full, for all preliminary composition, dedi-  
“ cation, direct or indirect application for fa-  
“ vor to the public, or to any private patron,



# P R E F A C E.

“ or party whatsoever; nothing to the contrary  
“ appearing to him from the side of Truth, or  
“ Reason.” Witness his hand, this 5th day of  
December 1710.

A. A. C. A. N. A. Æ.

C. M. D. C. L. X. X. J.



A

L E T T E R.

My LORD,

Sept. 1707.

NOW, you are returned to..... and before the season comes which must engage you in the weightier matters of state; if you care to be entertained a while with a sort of idle thoughts, such as pretend only to amusement, and have no relation to business or affairs, you may cast your eye slightly on what you have before you; and if there be any thing inviting, you may read it over at your leisure.

It has been an established custom for poets, at the entrance of their work, to address themselves to some Muse; and this practice of the ancients has gained so much repute, that even in our days we find it almost constantly imitated. I cannot but fancy, however, that this imitation, which passes so currently with other judgments, must at some time or other have stuck a little with your Lordship, who is used to examine things by a better standard than that of fashion or the common taste. You must certainly have observed our poets under a remarkable constraint, when obliged to assume this character: and you



have wondered, perhaps, why that air of enthusiasm which fits so gracefully with an ancient, should be so spiritless and awkward in a modern. But as to this doubt, your Lordship would have soon resolved yourself: and it could only serve to bring accross you a reflection you have often made, on many occasions besides, That truth is the most powerful thing in the world; since even fiction<sup>1</sup> itself must be governed by it, and can only please by its resemblance. The appearance of reality is necessary to make any passion agreeably represented: and to be able to move others, we must first be moved ourselves, or at least seem to be so, upon some probable grounds. Now, what possibility is there that a modern, who is known never to have worshipped Apollo, or owned any such deity as the Muses, should persuade us to enter into his pretended devotion, and move us by his feigned zeal in a religion out of date? But as for the ancients, it is known they derived both their religion and polity from the Muses' art. How natural therefore must it have appeared in any, but especially a poet of those times, to address himself in raptures of devotion to those acknowledged patronesses of wit and science? Here the poet might with probability feign an ecstasy, though he really felt none: and supposing it to have been mere affectation, it would look, however, like something natural, and could not fail of pleasing.

<sup>1</sup> Wit and hum. part 4. § 3. parag. 2.; and Misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 39. in vol. 3.



But perhaps, my Lord, there was a further mystery in the case. Men, your Lordship knows, are wonderfully happy in a faculty of deceiving themselves, whenever they set heartily about it; and a very small foundation of any passion will serve us, not only to act it well, but even to work ourselves into it beyond our own reach. Thus, by a little affectation in love-matters, and with the help of a romance or novel, a boy of fifteen, or a grave man of fifty, may be sure to grow a very natural coxcomb, and feel the belle passion in good earnest. A man of tolerable good nature, who happens to be a little piqued, may, by improving his resentment, become a very fury for revenge. Even a good Christian, who would needs be over-good, and thinks he can never believe enough, may, by a small inclination well improved, extend his faith so largely, as to comprehend in it not only all scriptural and traditional miracles, but a solid system of old-wives-stories. Were it needful, I could put your Lordship in mind of an eminent, learned, and truly Christian prelate you once knew, who could have given you a full account of his belief in Fairies. And this, methinks, may serve to make appear, how far an ancient poet's faith might possibly have been raised, together with his imagination.

But we Christians, who have such ample faith ourselves, will allow nothing to poor Heathens. They must be infidels in every sense. We will not allow them to believe so much as their own



religion, which we cry is too absurd to have been credited by any besides the mere vulgar. But if a reverend Christian prelate may be so great a volunteer in faith, as, beyond the ordinary prescription of the catholic church, to believe in Fairies; why may not a Heathen poet, in the ordinary way of his religion, be allowed to believe in Muses? For these, your Lordship knows, were so many divine persons in the Heathen creed, and were essential in their system of theology. The goddesses had their temples and worship, the same as the other deities: and to disbelieve the holy nine, or their Apollo, was the same as to deny Jove himself; and must have been esteemed equally profane and atheistical by the generality of sober men. Now, what a mighty advantage must it have been to an ancient poet to be thus orthodox, and by the help of his education, and a good-will into the bargain, to work himself up to the belief of a divine presence and heavenly inspiration? It was never surely the business of poets in those days to call revelation in question, when it evidently made so well for their art. On the contrary, they could not fail to animate their faith as much as possible; when by a single act of it, well enforced, they could raise themselves into such angelical company.

How much the imagination of such a presence must exalt a genius, we may observe merely from the influence which an ordinary presence has over men. Our modern wits are more or



less raised by the opinion they have of their company, and the idea they form to themselves of the persons to whom they make their addresses. A common actor of the stage will inform us how much a full audience of the better sort exalts him above the common pitch. And you, my Lord, who are the noblest actor, and of the noblest part assigned to any mortal on this earthly stage, when you are acting for liberty and mankind; does not the public presence, that of your friends, and the well-wishers to your cause, add something to your thought and genius? Or is that sublime of reason, and that power of eloquence, which you discover in public, no more than what you are equally master of in private; and can command at any time, alone, or with indifferent company, or in any easy or cool hour? This indeed were more godlike; but ordinary humanity, I think, reaches not so high.

For my own part, my Lord, I have really so much need of some considerable presence or company to raise my thoughts on any occasion, that when alone, I must endeavour by strength of fancy to supply this want; and in default of a Muse, must inquire out some great man of a more than ordinary genius, whose imagined presence may inspire me with more than what I feel at ordinary hours. And thus, my Lord, have I chosen to address myself to your Lordship, though without subscribing my name; allowing you as a stranger the full liberty of reading no more than what you may have a fancy



for ; but reserving to myself the privilege of imagining you read all with particular notice, as a friend, and one whom I may justifiably treat with the intimacy and freedom which follows.

## S E C T. II.

**I**F the knowing well how to expose any infirmity or vice were a sufficient security for the virtue which is contrary, how excellent an age might we be presumed to live in! Never was there in our nation a time known, when folly and extravagance of every kind were more sharply inspected, or more wittily ridiculed. And one might hope at least from this good symptom, that our age was in no declining state; since whatever our distempers are, we stand so well affected to our remedies. To bear the being told of faults, is in private persons the best token of amendment. It is seldom that a public is thus disposed. For where jealousy of state, or the ill lives of the great people, or any other cause, is powerful enough to restrain the freedom of censure in any part, it in effect destroys the benefit of it in the whole. There can be no impartial and free censure of manners, where any peculiar custom or national opinion is set apart, and not only exempted from criticism, but even flattered with the highest art. It is only in a free



nation, such as ours, that imposture has no privilege; and that neither the credit of a court, the power of a nobility, nor the awfulness of a church, can give her protection, or hinder her from being arraigned in every shape and appearance. It is true, this liberty may seem to run too far. We may perhaps be said to make ill use of it. — So every one will say, when he himself is touched, and his opinion freely examined. But who shall be judge of what may be freely examined, and what may not? where liberty may be used, and where it may not? What remedy shall we prescribe to this in general? Can there be a better than from that liberty itself which is complained of? If men are vitious, petulant, or abusive, the magistrate may correct them; but if they reason ill, it is reason still must teach them to do better. Justness of thought and style, refinement in manners, good-breeding, and politeness of every kind, can come only from the trial and experience of what is best. Let but the search go freely on, and the right measure of every thing will soon be found. Whatever humor has got the start, if it be unnatural, it cannot hold: and the ridicule, if ill placed at first, will certainly fall at last where it deserves.

I have often wondered to see men of sense so mightily alarmed at the approach of any thing like ridicule on certain subjects; as if they mistrusted their own judgment. For what ridicule can lie against reason? Or how can any one of the least justness of thought, endure a ridicule



wrong placed? Nothing is more ridiculous than this itself. The vulgar, indeed, may swallow any fordid jest, any mere drollery or buffoonery; but it must be a finer and truer wit which takes with the men of sense and breeding. How comes it to pass, then, that we appear such cowards in reasoning, and are so afraid to stand the test of ridicule? — O! say we, the subjects are too grave. — Perhaps so. But let us see first whether they are really grave or no: for in the manner we may conceive them, they may peradventure be very grave and weighty in our imagination, but very ridiculous and impertinent in their own nature. Gravity is of the very essence of imposture. It does not only make us mistake other things, but is apt perpetually almost to mistake itself. For even in common behaviour, how hard is it for the grave character to keep long out of the limits of the formal one? We can never be too grave, if we can be assured we are really what we suppose. And we can never too much honor or revere any thing for grave, if we are assured the thing is grave, as we apprehend it. The main point is, to know always true gravity from the false. And this can only be, by carrying the rule constantly with us, and freely applying it not only to the things about us, but to ourselves. For if unhappily we lose the measure in ourselves, we shall soon lose it in every thing besides. Now, what rule or measure is there in the world, except in the considering of the real temper of things, to find which are



truly serious, and which ridiculous? And how can this be done, unless by applying the ridicule to see whether it will bear<sup>1</sup>? But if we fear to apply this rule in any thing, what security can we have against the imposture of formality in all things? We have allowed ourselves to be formalists in one point; and the same formality may rule us as it pleases in all others.

It is not in every disposition that we are capacitated to judge of things. We must beforehand judge of our own temper, and accordingly of other things which fall under our judgment. But we must never more pretend to judge of things, or of our own temper in judging them, when we have given up our preliminary right of judgment; and, under a presumption of gravity, have allowed ourselves to be most ridiculous, and to admire profoundly the most ridiculous things in nature, at least for ought we know: for having resolved never to try, we can never be sure.

---

*Ridiculum acri*

*Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secatur res<sup>2</sup>.*

This, my Lord, I may safely aver, is so true in itself, and so well known for truth by the cunning formalists of the age, that they can better bear to have their impostures railed at, with all the bitterness and vehemence imaginable, than to have them touched ever so gently in this

<sup>1</sup> Wit and humor, part I. § 1. parag. 2, 3. and § 5. parag. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hor. sat. 10. lib. 1.



other way. They know very well, that as modes and fashions, so opinions, though ever so ridiculous, are kept up by solemnity; and that those formal notions, which grew up probably in an ill mood, and have been conceived in sober sadness, are never to be removed but in a sober kind of cheerfulness, and by a more easy and pleasant way of thought. There is a melancholy which accompanies all enthusiasm. Be it love or religion, (for there are enthusiasms in both), nothing can put a stop to the growing mischief of either, till the melancholy be removed, and the mind at liberty to hear what can be said against the ridiculousness of an extreme in either way.

It was heretofore the wisdom of some wise nations, to let people be fools as much as they pleased, and never to punish seriously what deserved only to be laughed at, and was, after all, best cured by that innocent remedy. There are certain humors in mankind, which, of necessity, must have vent. The human mind and body are both of them naturally subject to commotions, and as there are strange ferments in the blood, which in many bodies occasion an extraordinary discharge; so, in reason too, there are heterogeneous particles, which must be thrown off by fermentation. Should physicians endeavour absolutely to allay those ferments of the body, and strike in the humors which discover themselves in such eruptions, they might, instead of making a cure, bid fair perhaps to raise a plague, and turn a spring ague, or an autumn



surfeit, into an epidemical malignant fever. They are certainly as ill physicians in the body-politic, who would needs be tampering with these mental eruptions; and, under the specious pretence of healing this itch of superstition, and saving souls from the contagion of enthusiasm, should set all nature in an uproar, and turn a few innocent carbuncles into an inflammation and mortal gangrene.

We read in history<sup>3</sup>, that Pan, when he accompanied Bacchus in an expedition to the Indies, found means to strike a terror through a host of enemies, by the help of a small company, whose clamors he managed to good advantage among the echoing rocks and caverns of a woody vale. The hoarse bellowing of the caves, joined to the hideous aspect of such dark and desert places, raised such a horror in the enemy, that in this state their imagination helped them to hear voices, and doubtless to see forms too, which were more than human: whilst the uncertainty of what they feared made their fear yet greater, and spread it faster by implicit looks than any narration could convey it. And this was what in after-times men called a panic. The story indeed gives a good hint of the nature of this passion, which can hardly be without some mixture of enthusiasm, and horrors of a superstitious kind.

One may, with good reason, call every passion

<sup>3</sup> Polyæni stratag. lib. 1. chap. 2.



panic which is raised in a multitude, and conveyed by aspect, or, as it were, by contact or sympathy. Thus, popular fury may be called panic, when the rage of the people, as we have sometimes known, has put them beyond themselves; especially where religion has had to do<sup>4</sup>. And in this state, their very looks are infectious. The fury flies from face to face; and the disease is no sooner seen than caught. They who, in a better situation of mind, have beheld a multitude under the power of this passion, have owned, that they saw in the countenances of men something more ghastly and terrible than at other times is expressed on the most passionate occasions. Such force has society<sup>5</sup>, in ill as well as in good passions; and so much stronger any affection is for being social and communicative.

Thus, my Lord, there are many panics in mankind, besides merely that of fear. And thus is religion also panic, when enthusiasm of any kind gets up; as oft, on melancholy occasions, it will: for vapors naturally rise; and in bad times especially, when the spirits of men are low; as either in public calamities, or during the unwholesomeness of air or diet, or when convulsions happen in nature, storms, earthquakes, or other amazing prodigies: at this season the panic must needs run

<sup>4</sup> *Infra*, § 6 parag. 2.; and Misc. 2. chap. 2. parag. 5. in the notes, in vol. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Wit and humor, part 3. § 2. parag. 1.; Inquiry concerning virtue, book 2. part 2. § 1. parag. 3. 13. &c. 41. &c. in vol. 2.



high, and the magistrate of necessity give way to it. For, to apply a serious remedy, and bring the sword, or fasces, as a cure, must make the case more melancholy, and increase the very cause of the distemper. To forbid men's natural fears, and to endeavour the overpowering them by other fears, must needs be a most unnatural method. The magistrate, if he be any artist, should have a gentler hand; and, instead of caustics, incisions, and amputations, should be using the softest balms; and with a kind sympathy, entering into the concern of the people, and taking, as it were, their passion upon him, should, when he has soothed and satisfied it, endeavour, by chearful ways, to divert and heal it.

This was ancient policy: and hence, as a notable author<sup>6</sup> of our nation expresses it, it is necessary a people should have a public leading in religion. For to deny the magistrate a worship, or take away a national church, is as mere enthusiasm as the notion which sets up persecution. For why should there not be public walks as well as private gardens? why not public libraries as well as private education and home-tutors? But to prescribe bounds to fancy and speculation, to regulate men's apprehensions, and religious beliefs or fears, to suppress by violence the natural passion of enthusiasm, or to endeavour to ascertain it, or reduce it to one species, or bring it under any one modification, is in truth no better sense, nor

<sup>6</sup> Harrington.



deserves a better character, than what the comedian<sup>2</sup> declares of the like project in the affair of love —

— *Nihilo plus agas*

*Quam si des operam ut cum ratione insanias.*

Not only the visionaries and enthusiasts of all kinds were tolerated, your Lordship knows, by the ancients; but, on the other side, philosophy had as free a course, and was permitted as a balance against superstition: and whilst some sects, such as the Pythagorean and latter Platonic, joined in with the superstition and enthusiasm of the times, the Epicurean, the Academic, and others, were allowed to use all the force of wit and raillery against it. And thus matters were happily balanced. Reason had fair play; learning and science flourished. Wonderful was the harmony and temper which arose from all these contrarities. Thus superstition and enthusiasm were mildly treated; and being let alone, they never raged to that degree as to occasion bloodshed, wars, persecutions, and devastations in the world. But a new sort of policy, which extends itself to another world, and considers the future lives and happiness of men rather than the present, has made us leap the bounds of natural humanity; and, out of a supernatural charity, has taught us the way of plaguing one another most devoutly. It has raised

<sup>2</sup> Ter. Eun. act. 1. sc. 1.



an antipathy \* which no temporal interest could ever do; and entailed upon us a mutual hatred to all eternity: and now uniformity in opinion (a hopeful project!) is looked on as the only expedient against this evil. The saving of souls is now the heroic passion of exalted spirits; and is become in a manner the chief care of the magistrate, and the very end of government itself.

If magistracy should vouchsafe to interpose thus much in other sciences, I am afraid we should have as bad logic, as bad mathematics, and in every kind as bad philosophy; as we often have divinity in countries where a precise orthodoxy is settled by law. It is a hard matter for a government to settle wit. If it does but keep us sober and honest, it is likely we shall have as much ability in our spiritual as in our temporal affairs: and, if we can but be trusted, we shall have wit enough to save ourselves, when no prejudice lies in the way. But if honesty and wit be insufficient for this saving work, it is in vain for the magistrate to meddle with it; since, if he be ever so virtuous or wise, he may be as soon mistaken as another man. I am sure the only way to save men's sense, or preserve wit at all in the world, is to give liberty to wit. Now, wit can never have its liberty, where the freedom of raillery is taken away: for against serious extravagancies, and splenetic humors, there is no other remedy than this.

\* Misc. 2. chap. 1. parag. 35, 36, 37. &c. and chap. 2. parag. 25, 26. &c. in vol. 3.



We have indeed full power over all other modifications of spleen. We may treat other enthusiasms as we please. We may ridicule love or gallantry, or knight-errantry, to the utmost; and we find, that, in these latter days of wit, the humor of this kind, which was once so prevalent, is pretty well declined. The crusades, the rescuing of holy lands, and such devout gallantries, are in less request than formerly. But if something of this militant religion, something of this soul-rescuing spirit, and saint-errantry, prevails still, we need not wonder, when we consider in how solemn a manner we treat this distemper, and how preposterously we go about to cure enthusiasm.

I can hardly forbear fancying, that if we had a sort of inquisition, or formal court of judicature, with grave officers and judges, erected to restrain poetical licence, and in general to suppress that fancy and humor of versification; but in particular that most extravagant passion of love, as it is set out by poets, in its Heathenish dress of Venus and Cupids: if the poets, as ringleaders and teachers of this heresy, were, under grievous penalties, forbid to enchant the people by their vein of rhyming; and if the people, on the other side, were, under proportionable penalties, forbid to hearken to any such charm, or lend their attention to any love-tale, so much as in a play, a novel, or a ballad; we might perhaps see a new Arcadia arising out of this heavy persecution: old people and young would be seized with a versifying spirit: we should



should have field-conventicles of lovers and poets: forests would be filled with romantic shepherds and shepherdesses; and rocks resound with echoes of hymns and praises offered to the powers of love. We might indeed have a fair chance, by this management, to bring back the whole train of Heathen gods; and set our cold northern island, burning with as many altars to Venus and Apollo, as were formerly in Cyprus, Delos, or any of those warmer Grecian climates.

## S E C T. III.

**BUT**, my Lord, you may perhaps wonder, that having been drawn into such a serious subject as religion, I should forget myself so far as to give way to raillery and humor. I must own, my Lord, it is not merely through chance that this has happened. To say truth, I hardly care so much as to think on this subject, much less to write on it, without endeavouring to put myself in as good humor as is possible. People indeed who can endure no middle temper, but are all air and humor, know little of the doubts and scruples of religion, and are safe from any immediate influence of devout melancholy or enthusiasm; which requires more deliberation and thoughtful practice to fix itself in a temper, and grow habitual. But be the habit what it will, to be delivered of it at so sad a cost as inconsiderateness or madness,



is what I would never wish to be my lot. I had rather stand all adventures with religion, than endeavour to get rid of the thoughts of it by diversion. All I contend for, is to think of it in a right humor: and that this goes more than half-way towards thinking rightly of it, is what I shall endeavour to demonstrate.

Good Humor is not only the best security against enthusiasm, but the best foundation of piety and true religion: for if right thoughts and worthy apprehensions of the Supreme Being are fundamental to all true worship and adoration, it is more than probable, that we shall never miscarry in this respect, except through ill humor only. Nothing beside ill humor, either natural or forced, can bring a man to think seriously that the world is governed by any devilish or malicious power. I very much question whether any thing, besides ill humor, can be the cause of Atheism. For there are so many arguments to persuade a man in humor, that, in the main, all things are kindly and well disposed, that one would think it impossible for him to be so far out of conceit with affairs, as to imagine they all ran at adventures; and that the world, as venerable and wise a face as it carried, had neither sense nor meaning in it. This, however, I am persuaded of, that nothing beside ill humor can give us dreadful or ill thoughts of a supreme manager. Nothing can persuade us of fullness or founess in such a being, beside the actual forefeeling of somewhat of this kind within ourselves: and if we are afraid



of bringing good humor into religion, or thinking with freedom and pleasantness on such a subject as God; it is because we conceive the subject so like ourselves, and can hardly have a notion of majesty and greatness, without stateliness and moroseness accompanying it.

This, however, is the just reverse of that character, which we own to be most divinely good, when we see it, as we sometimes do, in men of highest power among us. If they pass for truly good, we dare treat them freely, and are sure they will not be displeased with this liberty. They are doubly gainers by this goodness of theirs. For the more they are searched into, and familiarly examined, the more their worth appears; and the discoverer, charmed with his success, esteems and loves more than ever, when he has proved this additional bounty in his superior, and reflects on that candor and generosity he has experienced. Your Lordship knows more perhaps of this mystery than any one. How else should you have been so beloved in power, and out of power so adhered to, and still more beloved?

Thank Heaven! there are even in our own age some such examples. In former ages there have been many such. We have known mighty princes, and even emperors of the world, who could bear unconcernedly, not only the free censure of their actions, but the most spiteful reproaches and calumnies, even to their faces. Some perhaps may wish there had never been



such examples found in Heathens ; but more especially , that the occasion had never been given by Christians. It was more the misfortune indeed of mankind in general , than of Christians in particular , that some of the earlier Roman emperors were such monsters of tyranny , and began a persecution , not on religious men merely , but on all who were suspected of worth or virtue. What could have been a higher honor or advantage to Christianity , than to be persecuted by a Nero ? But better princes , who came after , were persuaded to remit these severe courses. It is true , the magistrate might possibly have been surprised with the newness of a notion , which he might pretend , perhaps , did not only destroy the sacredness of his power , but treated him and all men as profane , impious , and damned , who entered not into certain particular modes of worship ; of which there had been formerly so many thousand instituted , all of them compatible and sociable till that time. However , such was the wisdom of some succeeding ministries , that the edge of persecution was much abated ; and even that prince <sup>1</sup> , who was esteemed the greatest enemy of the Christian sect , and who himself had been educated in it , was a great restrainer of persecution , and would allow of nothing further than a resumption of church-lands and public schools , without any attempt on the goods or persons even of those who branded the state-

<sup>1</sup> Misc. 2. ch. 2. parag. 31, 32. in the notes , in vol. 3.



religion, and made a merit of affronting the public worship.

It is well we have the authority of a sacred author in our religion, to assure us, that the spirit of love <sup>2</sup> and humanity is above that of martyrs. Otherwise, one might be a little scandalized, perhaps, at the history of many of our primitive confessors and martyrs, even according to our own accounts. There is hardly now in the world so good a Christian, (if this be indeed the mark of a good one), who, if he happened to live at Constantinople, or elsewhere under the protection of the Turks, would think it fitting or decent to give any disturbance to their Mosque-worship. And as good Protestants, my Lord, as you and I are, we would consider him as little better than a rank enthusiast, who, out of hatred to the Romish idolatry, should, in time of high mass, (where mass perhaps was by law established), interrupt the priest with clamors, or fall foul on his images and relics.

There are some, it seems, of our good brethren, the French Protestants, lately come among us, who are mightily taken with this primitive way. They have set afoot the spirit of martyrdom to a wonder in their own country; and they long to be trying it here, if we will give them leave, and afford them the occasion: that is to say, if we will only do them the favor to hang or imprison them; if we will only be so obliging as to break

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 3.



their bones for them, after their country-fashion, blow up their zeal, and stir afresh the coals of persecution. But no such grace can they hitherto obtain of us. So hard-hearted we are, that, notwithstanding their own mob are willing to bestow kind blows upon them, and fairly stone them now and then in the open street; though the priests of their own nation would gladly give them their desired discipline, and are earnest to light their probationary fires for them, we Englishmen, who are masters in our own country, will not suffer the enthusiasts to be thus used. Nor can we be supposed to act thus in envy to their phoenix-sect, which it seems has risen out of the flames, and would willingly grow to be a new church by the same manner of propagation as the old one, whose seed was truly said to be from the blood of the martyrs.

But how barbarous still, and more than Heathenishly cruel, are we tolerating Englishmen! For, not contented to deny these prophesying enthusiasts the honor of a persecution, we have delivered them over to the cruellest contempt in the world. I am told for certain, that they are at this very time<sup>1</sup> the subject of a choice droll or puppet-show at Bartholomew-fair. There, doubtless, their strange voices and involuntary agitations are admirably well acted, by the motion of wires and inspiration of pipes. For the bodies of the prophets, in their state of prophecy, being

<sup>1</sup> Viz. anno 1707.



not in their own power , but ( as they say themselves ) mere passive organs , actuated by an exterior force , have nothing natural , or resembling real life , in any of their sounds or motions : so that how awkwardly soever a puppet-show may imitate other actions , it must needs represent this passion to the life. And whilst Bartholomew-fair is in possession of this privilege , I dare stand security to our national church , that no sect of enthusiasts , no new venders of prophecy or miracles , shall ever get the start , or put her to the trouble of trying her strength with them , in any case.

Happy it was for us , that when Popery had got possession , Smithfield was used in a more tragical way. Many of our first reformers , it is feared , were little better than enthusiasts : and God knows , whether a warmth of this kind did not considerably help us in throwing off that spiritual tyranny. So that had not the priests , as is usual , preferred the love of blood to all other passions , they might , in a merrier way , perhaps have evaded the greatest force of our reforming spirit. I never heard that the ancient Heathens were so well advised in their ill purpose of suppressing the Christian religion in its first rise , as to make use , at any time , of this Bartholomew-fair method. But this I am persuaded of , that , had the truth of the gospel been any way surmountable , they would have bid much fairer for the silencing it , if they had chose to bring our primitive founders upon the stage in a pleasanter way than that of bear-skins and pitch-barrels.



The Jews were naturally a very cloudy people, and could endure little raillery in any thing<sup>4</sup>; much less in what belonged to any religious doctrines or opinions. Religion was looked upon with a fullen eye; and hanging was the only remedy they could prescribe for any thing which looked like setting up a new revelation. The sovereign argument was, Crucify, Crucify. But, with all their malice and inveteracy to our Saviour, and his apostles after him, had they but taken the fancy to act such puppet-shows in his contempt, as at this hour the Papists are acting in his honor; I am apt to think they might possibly have done our religion more harm than by all their other ways of severity.

I believe our great and learned apostle found less advantage from the easy treatment of his Athenian antagonists, than from the surly and cursed spirit of the most persecuting Jewish cities<sup>5</sup>. He made less improvement of the candor and civility of his Roman judges, than of the zeal of the synagogue, and vehemence of his national priests. Though when I consider this apostle as

<sup>4</sup> Our author having been censured for this and some following passages concerning the *Jews*, the reader is referred to the notes and citations in Misc. 2. c. 1. parag. 29, 30, 31, 32. c. 3. parag. 38, 39. in vol. 3. See also Advice to an author, part 3. § 1. parag. 4, 5. in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> What advantage he made of his sufferings, and how pathetically his *bonds* and *stripes* were set to view, and often pleaded by him, to raise his character, and advance the interest of Christianity, any one who reads his epistles, and is well acquainted with his manner and style, may easily observe.



appearing either before the witty Athenians, or before a Roman court of judicature, in the presence of their great men and ladies, and see how handsomely he accommodates himself to the apprehensions and temper of those politer people, I do not find that he declines the way of wit or good humor; but, without suspicion of his cause, is willing generously to commit it to this proof, and try it against the sharpness of any ridicule which might be offered.

But though the Jews were never pleased to try their wit or malice this way against our Saviour or his apostles; the irreligious part of the Heathens had tried it long before, against the best doctrines and best characters of men which had ever arisen amongst them. Nor did this prove in the end any injury, but on the contrary the highest advantage to those very characters and doctrines, which, having stood the proof, were found so solid and just. The divinest man who had ever appeared in the Heathen world, was, in the height of witty times, and by the wittiest of all poets, most abominably ridiculed, in a whole comedy writ and acted on purpose. But so far was this from sinking his reputation, or suppressing his philosophy, that they each increased the more for it; and he apparently grew to be more the envy of other teachers. He was not only contented to be ridiculed, but, that he might help the poet as much as possible, he presented himself openly in the theatre, that his real figure (which was no advantageous one) might be compared with that which the



witty poet had brought as his representative on the stage. Such was his good humor ! Nor could there be in the world a greater testimony of the invincible goodness of the man, or a greater demonstration, that there was no imposture either in his character or opinions. For that imposture should dare sustain the encounter of a grave enemy, is no wonder. A solemn attack, she knows, is not of such danger to her. There is nothing she abhors or dreads like pleasantness and good humor.

## S E C T. IV.

**I**N short, my Lord, the melancholy way of treating religion, is that which, according to my apprehension, renders it so tragical, and is the occasion of its acting in reality such dismal tragedies in the world. And my notion is, that, provided we treat religion with good manners, we can never use too much good humor, or examine it with too much freedom and familiarity. For if it be genuine and sincere, it will not only stand the proof, but thrive and gain advantage from hence: if it be spurious, or mixed with any imposture, it will be detected and exposed.

The melancholy way in which we have been taught religion, makes us unapt to think of it in good humor. It is in adversity chiefly, or in ill health, under affliction, or disturbance of mind,



or discomposure of temper, that we have recourse to it; though, in reality, we are never so unfit to think of it, as at such a heavy and dark hour. We can never be fit to contemplate any thing above us, when we are in no condition to look into ourselves, and calmly examine the temper of our own mind and passions. For then it is, we see wrath, and fury, and revenge, and terrors in the Deity; when we are full of disturbances and fears within, and have, by sufferance and anxiety, lost so much of the natural calm and easiness of our temper.

We must not only be in ordinary good humor, but in the best of humors, and in the sweetest, kindest disposition of our lives, to understand well what true goodness is, and what those attributes imply, which we ascribe with such applause and honor to the Deity. We shall then be able to see best, whether those forms of justice, those degrees of punishment, that temper of resentment, and those measures of offence and indignation, which we vulgarly suppose in God, are suitable to those original ideas of goodness, which the same Divine Being, or nature under him, has implanted in us, and which we must necessarily presuppose, in order to give him praise or honor in any kind. This, my Lord, is the security against all superstition: To remember, that there is nothing in God but what is godlike; and that he is either not at all, or truly and perfectly good. But when we are afraid to use our reason freely, even on that very question, "Whether he really be, or



“not?” we then actually presume him bad, and flatly contradict that pretended character of goodness and greatness; whilst we discover this mistrust of his temper, and fear his anger and resentment, in the case of this freedom of Inquiry.

We have a notable instance of this freedom in one of our sacred authors. As patient as Job is said to be, it cannot be denied, that he makes bold enough with God, and takes his providence roundly to task. His friends, indeed, plead hard with him, and use all arguments, right or wrong, to patch up objections, and set the affairs of providence upon an equal foot. They make a merit of saying all the good they can of God, at the very stretch of their reason, and sometimes quite beyond it. But this, in Job's opinion, is flattering God, accepting of God's person, and even mocking him<sup>1</sup>. And no wonder. For what merit can there be, in believing God, or his providence, upon frivolous and weak grounds? What virtue in assuming an opinion contrary to the appearance of things, and resolving to hear nothing which may be said against it? Excellent character of the God of truth! that he should be offended at us, for having refused to put the lie upon our understandings, as much as in us lay, and be satisfied with us for having believed at a venture, and against our reason, what might have been the greatest falshood in the world, for any thing we could bring as a proof or evidence to the contrary!

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xiii. 7, 8, 9, & 10.



It is impossible, that any besides an ill-natured man can wish against the being of a God : for this is wishing against the public ; and even against one's private good too, if rightly understood. But if a man has not any such ill-will to stifle his belief, he must have surely an unhappy opinion of God, and believe him not so good by far as he knows himself to be, if he imagines, that an impartial use of his reason, in any matter of speculation whatsoever, can make him run any risk hereafter ; and that a mean denial of his reason, and an affectation of belief, in any point too hard for his understanding, can entitle him to any favor in another world. This is being sycophants in religion, mere parasites of devotion. It is using God as the crafty beggars use those they address to, when they are ignorant of their quality<sup>2</sup>. The novices amongst them may innocently come out, perhaps, with a Good Sir, or a Good forsooth ! But with the old stagers, no matter whom they meet in a coach, it is always Good your Honor ! or Good your Lordship ! or your Ladyship ! For, if there should be really a lord in the case, we should be undone (say they) for want of giving the title : but if the party should be no lord, there would be no offence, it would not be ill taken.

And thus it is in religion. We are highly concerned how to beg right, and think all depends upon hitting the title, and making a good guess.

<sup>2</sup> Misc. 2. chap. 3. parag. 53, 54. in vol. 3.



It is the most beggarly refuge imaginable, which is so mightily cried up, and stands as a great maxim with many able men, "That they should strive to have faith, and believe to the utmost: because if, after all, there be nothing in the matter, there will be no harm in being thus deceived; but if there be any thing, it will be fatal for them not to have believed to the full." But they are so far mistaken, that whilst they have this thought, it is certain they can never believe, either to their satisfaction and happiness in this world, or with any advantage or recommendation to another. For besides that our reason, which knows the cheat, will never rest thoroughly satisfied on such a bottom, but turn us often adrift, and toss us in a sea of doubt and perplexity; we cannot but actually grow worse in our religion, and entertain a worse opinion still of a supreme Deity, whilst our belief is founded on so injurious a thought of him.

To love the public, to study universal good, and to promote the interest of the whole world, as far as lies within our power, is surely the height of goodness, and makes that temper which we call divine. In this temper, my Lord, (for surely you should know it well), it is natural for us to wish that others should partake with us, by being convinced of the sincerity of our example. It is natural for us to wish our merit should be known; particularly, if it be our fortune to have served a nation as a good minister; or, as some prince or father of a country, to have rendered happy a



considerable part of mankind under our care. But if it happened, that of this number there should be some so ignorantly bred, and of so remote a province, as to have lain out of the hearing of our name and actions; or hearing of them, should be so puzzled with odd and contrary stories, told up and down concerning us, that they knew not what to think, whether there were really in the world any such person as ourself: should we not, in good truth, be ridiculous, to take offence at this? And should we not pass for extravagantly morose and ill-humored, if, instead of treating matter in raillery, we should think in earnest of revenging ourselves on the offending parties, who, out of their rustic ignorance, ill judgment, or incredulity, had detracted from our renown?

How shall we say then? Does it really deserve praise to be thus concerned about it? Is the doing good for glory's sake so divine a thing? or, is it not diviner, to do good even where it may be thought inglorious, even to the ungrateful, and to those who are wholly insensible of the good they receive? How comes it then, that what is so divine in us, should lose its character in the Divine Being? and that, according as the Deity is represented to us, he should more resemble the weak, womanish, and impotent part of our nature<sup>3</sup>, than the generous, manly, and divine?

<sup>3</sup> Advice to an author, part 3. § 3. parag. 4. in this volume; and Misc. 5. chap. 3. parag. 19. in vol. 3.



## S E C T. V.

ONE would think, my Lord, it were in reality, no hard thing to know our own weaknesses at first sight, and distinguish the features of human frailty, with which we are so well acquainted. One would think it were easy to understand, that provocation, and offence, anger, revenge, jealousy in point of honor or power, love of fame, glory, and the like, belong only to limited beings, and are necessarily excluded a being which is perfect and universal. But if we have never settled with ourselves any notion of what is morally excellent; or if we cannot trust to that reason which tells us, that nothing beside what is so, can have place in the Deity; we can neither trust to any thing which others relate of him, or which he himself reveals to us. We must be satisfied before hand that he is good, and cannot deceive us. Without this, there can be no real religious faith, or confidence. Now, if there be really something previous to revelation, some antecedent demonstration of reason, to assure us that God is, and withal, that he is so good as not to deceive us; the same reason, if we will trust to it, will demonstrate to us, that God is so good as to exceed the very best of us in goodness. And after this manner, we can have no dread or suspicion to render us uneasy: for it is malice only, and not goodness, which can make us afraid.

There



There is an odd way of reasoning, but in certain distempers of mind very sovereign to those who can apply it; and it is this: "There can be no malice but where interests are opposed. A universal being can have no interest opposite, and therefore can have no malice." If there be a general mind, It can have no particular interest: but the general good, or good of the whole, and its own private good, must of necessity be one and the same. It can intend nothing besides, nor aim at any thing beyond, nor be provoked to any thing contrary. So that we have only to consider, whether there be really such a thing as a Mind which has relation to the whole, or not. For if unhappily there be no mind, we may comfort ourselves, however, that nature has no malice. If there be really a Mind, we may rest satisfied, that it is the best-natured one in the world. The last case, one would imagine, should be the most comfortable; and the notion of a common parent less frightful than that of forlorn nature, and a fatherless world. Though, as religion stands amongst us, there are many good people who would have less fear in being thus exposed; and would be easier perhaps in their minds, if they were assured they had only mere chance to trust to. For no body trembles to think there should be no God, but rather that there should be one. This, however, would be otherwise, if Deity were thought as kindly of as humanity; and we could be persuaded to believe, that if there really was a



God, the highest goodness must of necessity belong to him, without any of those defects of passion<sup>1</sup>, those meannesses and imperfections which we acknowledge such in ourselves, which, as good men, we endeavour all we can to be superior to, and which we find we every day conquer, as we grow better.

Methinks, my Lord, it would be well for us, if, before we ascended into the higher regions of divinity<sup>2</sup>, we would vouchsafe to descend a little into ourselves, and bestow some poor thoughts upon plain honest morals. When we had once looked into ourselves, and distinguished well the nature of our own affections, we should probably be fitter judges of the divineness of a character, and discern better what affections were suitable or unsuitable to a perfect being. We might then understand how to love and praise, when we had acquired some consistent notion of what was laudable or lovely; otherwise we might chance to do God little honor, when we intended him the most. For it is hard to imagine what honor can arise to the Deity, from the praises of creatures

<sup>1</sup> For my own part, says honest *Plutarch*, I had rather men should say of me, "That there neither is, nor ever was such a one as *Plutarch*;" than they should say, "There was a *Plutarch*, an unsteady, changeable, easily provokable, and revengeful man. "Ἀνθρώπος ἀδέσβαιος, ἐνμειλίχολος, ἐυχερὴς πρὸς ὀργήν, μικρόλυπος," &c. *Plutarch* de superstitione. See Misc. 2. chap. 3. parag. 54. in vol. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Misc. 2. chap. 1. parag. 14. and Misc. 4. chap. 1. parag. 28, 29, 30. in the notes, in vol. 3.



who are unable to discern what is praise-worthy or excellent in their own kind.

If a musician were cried up to the skies by a certain set of people who had no ear in music, he would surely be put to the blush; and could hardly, with a good countenance, accept the benevolence of his auditors, till they had acquired a more competent apprehension of him, and could, by their own senses, find out something really good in his performance. Till this were brought about, there would be little glory in the case; and the musician, though ever so vain, would have little reason to be contented.

They who affect praise the most, had rather not be taken notice of, than be impertinently applauded. I know not how it comes about, that he who is ever said to do good the most disinterestedly, should be thought desirous of being praised so lavishly, and be supposed to set so high a rate upon so cheap and low a thing, as ignorant commendation and forced applause.

It is not the same with goodness as with other qualities, which we may understand very well, and yet not possess. We may have an excellent ear in music, without being able to perform in any kind; we may judge well of poetry, without being poets, or possessing the least of a poetic vein: but we can have no tolerable notion of goodness, without being tolerably good. So that if the praise of a divine being be so great a part of his worship, we should, methinks, learn goodness, were it for nothing else than that we might



learn, in some tolerable manner, how to praise. For the praise of goodness from an unsound, hollow heart, must certainly make the greatest dissonance in the world.

## S E C T. VI.

Other reasons, my Lord, there are, why this plain home-spun philosophy, of looking into ourselves, may do us wondrous service, in rectifying our errors in religion. For there is a sort of enthusiasm of second hand. And when men find no original commotions in themselves, no prepossessing panic which bewitches them, they are apt still, by the testimony of others, to be imposed on, and led credulously into the belief of many false miracles. And this habit may make them variable, and of a very inconstant faith, easy to be carried away with every wind of doctrine, and addicted to every upstart sect or superstition. But the knowledge of our passions in their very seeds, the measuring well the growth and progress of enthusiasm, and the judging rightly of its natural force, and what command it has over our very senses<sup>1</sup>, may teach us to oppose more successfully those delusions which come armed with the specious pretext of moral certainty, and matter of fact.

<sup>1</sup> Mis. 2. ch. 1. parag. 15, 16. and ch. 2. parag. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. in vol. 3.



The new prophesying sect I made mention of above, pretend, it seems, among many other miracles, to have had a most signal one, acted premeditately, and with warning, before many hundreds of people, who actually give testimony to the truth of it. But I would only ask, whether there were present, among those hundreds, any one person, who having never been of their sect, or addicted to their way, will give the same testimony with them? I must not be contented to ask, Whether such a one had been wholly free of that particular enthusiasm? but, Whether, before that time, he was esteemed of so sound a judgment, and clear a head, as to be wholly free of melancholy, and in all likelihood incapable of all enthusiasm besides? For otherwise the panic may have been caught; the evidence of the senses lost, as in a dream; and the imagination so inflamed, as in a moment to have burnt up every particle of judgment and reason. The combustible matters lie prepared within, and ready to take fire at a spark; but chiefly in a multitude seized with the same spirit<sup>2</sup>. No wonder if the blaze rises so of a sudden; when innumerable eyes glow with the passion, and heaving breasts are laboring with inspiration; when not the aspect only, but the very breath and exhalations of men, are infectious, and the inspiring disease imparts itself by insensible transpiration. I am not a divine good enough to resolve, what spirit that was, which proved so

<sup>2</sup> Misc. 2. ch. 2. parag. 5. in the notes, in vol. 3.



catching among the ancient prophets, that even the profane Saul was taken by it<sup>3</sup>. But I learn from holy scripture, that there was the evil<sup>4</sup>, as well as the good spirit of prophecy. And I find by present experience, as well as by all histories, sacred and profane, that the operation of this spirit is every where the same, as to the bodily organs.

A gentleman who has writ lately in defence of revived prophecy, and has since fallen himself into the prophetic ecstasies, tells, "That the ancient prophets had the spirit of God upon them under ecstasy, with divers strange gestures of body denominating them madmen, (or enthusiasts); as appears evidently, says he, in the instances of Balaam, Saul, David, Ezekiel, Daniel, &c." And he proceeds to justify this by the practice of the apostolic times, and by the regulation which the apostle<sup>5</sup> himself applies to these seemingly irregular gifts, so frequent and ordinary (as our author pretends) in the primitive church, on the first rise and spreading of Christianity. But I leave it to him to make the resemblance as well as he can between his own and the apostolic way. I only know, that the symptoms he describes, and which himself (poor gentleman!) labors under, are as Heathenish as he can possibly pretend them to be Christian. And when I saw him lately under

<sup>3</sup> See 1 Sam. x.

<sup>4</sup> See 1 Kings xxii. 20. &c. 2 Chron. xviii. 19. &c.; and Misc. 2. chap. 3. parag. 38. in vol. 3.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xiv.



an agitation, (as they call it), uttering prophecy in a pompous Latin style, of which, out of his ecstasy, it seems, he is wholly incapable; it brought into my mind the Latin poet's description of the Sybil, whose agonies were so perfectly like these.

• — *Subito non vultus, non color unus,  
Non comæ mansere comæ; sed pectus anhelum,  
Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,  
Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine quando  
Jam proprio Dei —*

And again presently after:

— — *Immanis in antro  
Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit  
Excussisse Deum: tanto magis ille fatigat  
Os rabidum, fera corda domans, FINGITQUE PREMENDO.*

Which is the very style of our experienced author. "For the inspired (says he) undergo a probation, wherein the spirit, by frequent agitations, forms the organs, ordinarily for a month or two before utterance."

The Roman historian, speaking of a most horrible enthusiasm which broke out in Rome long before his days, describes this spirit of prophecy; "Viros velut mente capta, cum jactatione fanatica corporis vaticinari." Liv. 39. The detestable things which are further related of these enthusiasts,

<sup>6</sup> Virg. Æn. lib. 6.



I would not willingly transcribe: but the senate's mild decree in so execrable a case, I cannot omit copying; being satisfied, that though your Lordship has read it before now, you can read it again and again with admiration: "In reliquum deinde", says Livy, "S. C. cautum est, &c. Si quis tale  
 " sacrum solenne & necessarium duceret, nec sine  
 " religione & piaculo se id omittere posse; apud  
 " Prætorem Urbanum profiteretur: Prætor senatum  
 " consularet. Si ei permissum esset, cum in senatu  
 " centum non minus essent, ita id sacrum faceret;  
 " dum ne plus quinque sacrificio interessent, neu  
 " qua pecunia communis, neu quis magister sacro-  
 " rum, aut sacerdos esset."

So necessary it is to give way to this distemper of enthusiasm, that even that philosopher who bent the whole force of his philosophy against superstition, appears to have left room for visionary fancy, and to have indirectly tolerated enthusiasm. For it is hard to imagine, that one who had so little religious faith as Epicurus, should have so vulgar a credulity, as to believe those accounts of armies and castles in the air; and such visionary phænomena. Yet he allows them; and then thinks to solve them by his effluvia, and aerial looking-glasses, and I know not what other stuff: which his Latin poet, however, sets off beautifully, as he does all.

<sup>2</sup> — *Rerum simulacra vagari,*

*Multa, modis multis, in cunctas undique partes*

<sup>3</sup> *Lucret. lib. 4.*



*Tenuia, quæ facile inter se junguntur in auris,  
Obvia cum veniunt, ut aranea bractæaque auri.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Centaurus itaque, et Scyllarum membra videmus,  
Cerbereasque canum facies, simulacraque eorum  
Quorum morte obita tellus amplectitur ossa;*

*Omne genus quoniam passim simulacra feruntur,  
Partim sponte sua quæ sunt aere in ipso;  
Partim quæ variis ab rebus cumque recedunt.*

It was a sign this philosopher believed there was a good stock of visionary spirit originally in human nature. He was so satisfied that men were inclined to see visions, that rather than they should go without, he chose to make them to their hand. Notwithstanding he denied the principles of religion to be natural<sup>\*</sup>, he was forced tacitly to allow there was a wondrous disposition in mankind towards supernatural objects; and that if these ideas were vain, they were yet in a manner innate, or such as men were really born to, and could hardly by any means avoid. From which concession, a divine, methinks, might raise a good argument against him, for the truth as well as the usefulness of religion. But so it is: whether the matter of apparition be true or false, the symptoms are the same, and the passion of equal force in the person who is vision-struck. The Lymphatici of the Latins were the Nympholepti

<sup>\*</sup> Wit and hum. part 3. § 3. parag. 4. in this vol.



of the Greeks. They were persons said to have seen some species of divinity, as either some rural deity, or nymph, which threw them into such transports as overcame their reason. The ecstasies expressed themselves outwardly in quakings, tremblings, tossings of the head and limbs, agitations, and (as Livy calls them) fanatical throws or convulsions, extemporary prayer, prophecy, singing, and the like. All nations have their Lymphatics of some kind or another; and all churches, Heathen as well as Christian, have had their complaints against fanaticism.

One would think the ancients imagined this disease had some relation to that which they called hydrophoby. Whether the ancient Lymphatics had any way like that of biting, to communicate the rage of their distemper, I cannot so positively determine. But certain fanatics there have been since the time of the ancients, who have had a most prosperous faculty of communicating the appetite of the teeth. For since first the snappish spirit got up in religion, all sects have been at it, as the saying is, tooth and nail; and are never better pleased, than in worrying one another without mercy.

So far indeed the innocent kind of fanaticism extends itself, that when the party is struck by the apparition, there follows always an itch of imparting it, and kindling the same fire in other breasts. For thus poets are fanatics too. And thus Horace either is, or feigns himself lymphatic, and



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shows what an effect the vision of the nymphs and Bacchus had on him.

<sup>9</sup> *Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus*  
*Vidi docentem, credite posteri,*  
*NYMPHASque discentes — — —*  
*Evæ! recenti mens trepidat metu,*  
*Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum*  
<sup>10</sup> *LYMPHATUR — — — — — as*  
Heinsius reads.

No poet (as I ventured to say at first to your Lordship) can do any thing great in his own way, without the imagination or supposition of a divine presence, which may raise him to some degree of this passion we are speaking of. Even the cold Lucretius <sup>11</sup> makes use of inspiration, when he writes against it; and is forced to raise an apparition of nature, in a divine form, to animate and conduct him in his very work of degrading nature, and despoiling her of all her seeming wisdom and divinity.

<sup>12</sup> *Alma VENUS, cæli subter labentia signa*  
*Quæ mare navigerum, quæ terras frugiferentis*

<sup>9</sup> Od. 19. lib. 2.

<sup>10</sup> So again, *sat. 5. lib. 1. ver. 97. Gnatia lymphis Iratis exstructa:* where Horace wittily treats the people of Gnatia as lymphatics and enthusiasts, for believing a miracle of their priests: *Credat Judæas Apella.* Hor. *ibid.* See Heinsius and Torrentius; and the quotation in the following notes, ὑπὸ τῶν Νυμφῶν, etc.

<sup>11</sup> Miscell. 2. chap. 1. parag. 6. in vol. 3.

<sup>12</sup> Lucret. lib. 1.



*Concelebras — —*

*Quæ quoniam rerum naturam sola gubernas,  
Nec sine te quidquam dias in luminis oras  
Exoritur, neque fit letum neque amabile quidquam:  
Te sociam studio scribundis versibus esse,  
Quos ego de rerum natura pangere conor  
MEMMIADÆ nostro.*

## S E C T. VII.

THE only thing, my Lord, I would infer from all this is, that Enthusiasm is wonderfully powerful and extensive; that it is a matter of nice judgment, and the hardest thing in the world to know fully and distinctly; since even Atheism<sup>1</sup> is not exempt from it: for, as some have well remarked, there have been enthusiastical Atheists. Nor can divine inspiration, by its outward marks, be easily distinguished from it. For inspiration is a real feeling of the divine presence, and enthusiasm a false one. But the passion they raise is much alike. For when the mind is taken up in vision, and fixes its view either on any real object, or mere spectre of divinity; when it sees, or thinks it sees any thing prodigious, and more than human; its horror, delight, confusion, fear, admiration, or whatever passion belongs to it, or is uppermost on this occasion, will have something vast, immane,

<sup>1</sup> Misc. 2. ch. 2. parag. 2. in vol. 3.



and (as painters say) beyond life. And this is what gave occasion to the name of fanaticism, as it was used by the ancients in its original sense, for an apparition transporting the mind.

Something there will be of extravagance and fury, when the ideas or images received are too big for the narrow human vessel to contain. So that inspiration may be justly called divine Enthusiasm: for the word itself signifies divine presence, and was made use of by the philosopher whom the earliest Christian fathers called divine, to express whatever was sublime in human passions<sup>2</sup>. This was the spirit he allotted to heroes, statesmen, poets, orators, musicians, and even philosophers themselves. Nor can we, of our own accord, forbear ascribing to a noble Enthusiasm<sup>3</sup>, whatever is greatly performed by any of these. So that almost all of us know something of this principle.

<sup>2</sup> "Αρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι ὑπὸ τῶν Νυμφῶν ἐκ προνοίας σαφῶς ἐνθουσιάζω.  
— Τοσαῦτα μὲν σοι καὶ ἔτι πλείω ἔχω μανίας γιγνομένης ἀπὸ θεῶν λέγειν καλὰ ἔργα, etc. Phædr. Καὶ τὰς πολιτικὰς ἐχ' ἥκιστα τῶν Φαῖμεν ἀν' θείας τε εἶναι καὶ ἐνθουσιάζειν. Meno. "Εγὼν εἰν' αὐτῶν καὶ περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τῷτο ὅτι καὶ σοφία ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ χρησμῶδοι. Apol. In particular as to philosophers, Plutarch tells us, it was the complaint of some of the four old Romans, when learning first came to them from Greece, that their youth grew enthusiastic with philosophy. For, speaking of one of the philosophers of the Athenian embassy, he says, "Ερωτα δεινὸν ἐμβέβληκε τοῖς νέοις ὑφ' ἧς τῶν ἄλλων ἡδονῶν καὶ διατριβῶν ἐκπέσοντες ἐνθουσιῶσι περὶ φιλοσοφίαν. Plut. in vit. Cat. Major.

<sup>3</sup> Of this passion, in the nobler and higher sense, see more, Inq. concern. virtue, book 1. part 3. § 3. parag. 4. from the end, and Rhaps. part 3. § 2. parag. 6, 7. &c. in vol. 2.; and Misc. 2. ch. 1. parag. 3, 7, 8, 9, 14. in vol. 3.



But to know it as we should do, and discern it in its several kinds, both in ourselves and others; this is the great work, and by this means alone we can hope to avoid delusion. For to judge the spirits whether they are of God, we must antecedently judge our own spirit; whether it be of reason and sound sense; whether it be fit to judge at all, by being sedate, cool, and impartial; free of every biasing passion, every giddy vapor, or melancholy fume. This is the first knowledge and previous judgment: "To understand ourselves, and know what spirit we are of." Afterwards we may judge the spirit in others, consider what their personal merit is, and prove the validity of their testimony by the solidity of their brain. By this means we may prepare ourselves with some antidote against Enthusiasm. And this is what I have dared affirm, is best performed by keeping to Good Humor. For otherwise the remedy itself may turn to the disease.

And now, my Lord, having, after all, in some measure justified Enthusiasm, and owned the word; if I appear extravagant, in addressing to you after the manner I have done, you must allow me to plead an impulse. You must suppose me (as with truth you may) most passionately yours; and with that kindness which is natural to you on other occasions, you must tolerate your enthusiastic friend, who, excepting only in the case of this over-forward zeal, must ever appear, with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's, &c.



T R E A T I S E I I.  
V I Z.  
S E N S U S C O M M U N I S :  
A N  
E S S A Y  
O N T H E  
F R E E D O M  
O F  
W I T A N D H U M O R.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

—— *Hac urget lupus, hac canis.* ——

HOR. sat. 2. lib. 2.



THE FIRST

SEASONS

Y 1 2 3

THE SECOND

WITNESS

MADE



A N

E S S A Y.

P A R T I.

S E C T. I.

**I** Have been considering, my friend ! what your fancy was, to express such a surprise as you did the other day, when I happened to speak to you in commendation of raillery. Was it possible you should suppose me so grave a man, as to dislike all conversation of this kind ? Or were you afraid I should not stand the trial, if you put me to it, by making the experiment in my own case ?

I must confess, you had reason enough for your caution, if you could imagine me at the bottom so true a zealot, as not to bear the least raillery on my own opinions. It is the case, I know, with many. Whatever they think grave or solemn, they suppose must never be treated out of a grave and solemn way ; though what another thinks so, they can be contented to treat otherwise ; and are forward to try the edge of ridicule against any opinions besides their own.

The question is, Whether this be fair or no ? and whether it be not just and reasonable, to make as free with our own opinions, as with those of other people ? For to be sparing in this case,



may be looked upon as a piece of selfishness. We may be charged perhaps with wilful ignorance, and blind idolatry, for having taken opinions upon trust, and consecrated in ourselves certain idol notions, which we will never suffer to be unveiled, or seen in open light. They may perhaps be monsters, and not divinities, or sacred truths, which are kept thus choicely in some dark corner of our minds. The spectres may impose on us, whilst we refuse to turn them every way, and view their shapes and complexions in every light. For that which can be shown only in a certain light, is questionable. Truth, it is supposed, may bear all lights: and one of those principal lights, or natural mediums, by which things are to be viewed, in order to a thorough recognition, is Ridicule itself, or that manner of proof by which we discern whatever is liable to just raillery in any subject. So much, at least, is allowed by all who at any time appeal to this criterion. The gravest gentlemen, even in the gravest subjects, are supposed to acknowledge this; and can have no right, it is thought, to deny others the freedom of this appeal; whilst they are free to censure like other men, and in their gravest arguments make no scruple to ask, Is it not ridiculous?

Of this affair, therefore, I design you should know fully what my sentiments are. And by this means you will be able to judge of me, whether I was sincere the other day in the defence of raillery, and can continue still to plead for those ingenious friends of ours, who are often censured for



their humor of this kind, and for the freedom they take in such an airy way of conversation and writing.

## S E C T. II.

**I**N good earnest, when one considers what use is sometimes made of this species of wit, and to what an excess it has risen of late, in some characters of the age; one may be startled a little, and in doubt what to think of the practice, or whither this rallying humor will at length carry us. It has passed from the men of pleasure to the men of business: Politicians have been infected with it: and the grave affairs of state have been treated with an air of irony and banter. The ablest negociators have been known the notablest buffoons; the most celebrated authors, the greatest masters of burlesque.

There is indeed a kind of defensive raillery (if I may so call it) which I am willing enough to allow in affairs of whatever kind; when the spirit of curiosity would force a discovery of more truth than can conveniently be told. For we can never do more injury to truth, than by discovering too much of it on some occasions. It is the same with understandings as with eyes. To such a certain size and make, just so much light is necessary, and no more. Whatever is beyond, brings darkness and confusion.



It is real humanity and kindness, to hide strong truths from tender eyes. And to do this by a pleasant amusement, is easier and civiler, than by a harsh denial, or remarkable reserve. But to go about industriously to confound men, in a mysterious manner, and to make advantage, or draw pleasure, from that perplexity they are thrown into, by such uncertain talk; is as unhandsome in a way of rail-lery, as when done with the greatest seriousness, or in the most solemn way of deceit. It may be necessary, as well now as heretefore, for wise men to speak in parables, and with a double meaning, that the enemy may be amused, and they only who have ears to hear, may hear. But it is certainly a mean, impotent, and dull sort of wit, which amuses all alike, and leaves the most sensible man, and even a friend, equally in doubt, and at a loss to understand what one's real mind is, upon any subject.

This is that gross sort of raillery which is so offensive in good company. And indeed there is as much difference between one sort and another, as between fair dealing and hypocrisy; or between the genteelest wit and the most scurrilous buffoonery. But by freedom of conversation, this illiberal kind of wit will lose its credit. For wit is its own remedy. Liberty and commerce bring it to its true standard. The only danger is, the laying an embargo. The same thing happens here as in the case of trade. Impositions and restrictions reduce it to a low ebb: nothing is so advantageous to it as a free port.



We have seen in our own time the decline and ruin of a false sort of wit, which so much delighted our ancestors, that their poems and plays, as well as sermons, were full of it. All humor and something of the quibble. The very language of the court was punning. But it is now banished the town and all good company: there are only some few footsteps of it in the country; and it seems at last confined to the nurseries of youth, as the chief entertainment of pedants and their pupils. And thus in other respects wit will mend upon our hands; and humor will refine itself, if we take care not to tamper with it, and bring it under constraint, by severe usage and rigorous prescriptions. All politeness is owing to liberty. We polish one another, and rub off our corners and rough sides by a sort of amicable collision. To restrain this, is inevitably to bring a rust upon men's understandings. It is a destroying of civility, good-breeding, and even charity itself, under pretence of maintaining it.

## S E C T. III.

**T**O describe true raillery, would be as hard a matter, and perhaps as little to the purpose, as to define good-breeding. None can understand the speculation, beside those who have the practice. Yet every one thinks himself well-bred: and the formallest pedant imagines he can rally with a good grace and humor. I have known some of those



grave gentlemen undertake to correct an author for defending the use of raillery, who at the same time have, upon every turn, made use of that weapon, though they were naturally so very awkward at it. And this I believe may be observed in the case of many zealots, who have taken upon them to answer our modern free-writers. The tragical gentlemen, with the grim aspect and mien of true inquisitors, have but an ill grace, when they vouchsafe to quit their austerity, and be jocose and pleasant with an adversary, whom they would chuse to treat in a very different manner. For, to do them justice, had they their wills, I doubt not but their conduct and mien would be pretty much of a piece. They would, in all probability soon quit their farce, and make a thorough tragedy. But at present there is nothing so ridiculous as this Janus-Face of writers, who with one countenance force a smile, and with another show nothing beside rage and fury. Having entered the lists, and agreed to the fair laws of combat by wit and argument, they have no sooner proved their weapon, than you hear them crying aloud for help, and delivering over to the secular arm.

There cannot be a more preposterous fight than an executioner and a merry-Andrew acting their part upon the same stage. Yet I am persuaded any one will find this to be the real picture of certain modern zealots, in their controversial writings. They are no more masters of gravity, than they are of good humor. The first always runs into harsh severity, and the latter into an awkward



buffoonery. And thus, between anger and pleasure, zeal and drollery, their writing has much such a grace as the play of humorfome children, who, at the same instant, are both peevish and wanton, and can laugh and cry, almost in one and the same breath.

How agreeable such writings are like to prove, and of what effect towards the winning over or convincing those who are supposed to be in error, I need not go about to explain. Nor can I wonder, on this account, to hear those public lamentations of zealots, that whilst the books of their adversaries are so current, their answers to them can hardly make their way into the world, or be taken the least notice of. Pedantry and bigotry are millstones, able to sink the best book which carries the least part of their dead weight. The temper of the pedagogue suits not with the age: and the world, however it may be taught, will not be tutored. If a philosopher speaks, men hear him willingly, while he keeps to his philosophy. So is a Christian heard, while he keeps to his professed charity and meekness. In a gentleman we allow of pleasantry and raillery, as being managed always with good-breeding, and never gross or clownish. But if a mere scholastic, intrenching upon all these characters, and writing as it were by starts and rebounds from one of these to another, appears upon the whole as little able to keep the temper of Christianity, as to use the reason of a philosopher, or the raillery of a man of breeding; what wonder is it, if the monstrous



product of such a jumbled brain be ridiculous to the world?

If you think, my friend! that by this description I have done wrong to these zealot-writers in religious controversy; read only a few pages in any one of them, (even where the contest is not abroad, but within their own pale), and then pronounce.

#### S E C T. IV.

**BUT** now that I have said thus much concerning authors and writings, you shall hear my thoughts, as you have desired, upon the subject of conversation; and particularly a late one, of a free kind, which you remember I was present at, with some friends of yours, whom you fancied I should in great gravity have condemned.

It was, I must own, a very diverting one; and perhaps not the less so, for ending as abruptly as it did, and in such a sort of confusion as almost brought to nothing whatever had been advanced in the discourse before. Some particulars of this conversation may not perhaps be so proper to commit to paper. It is enough that I put you in mind of the conversation in general. A great many fine schemes, it is true, were destroyed; many grave reasonings overturned: but this being done without offence to the parties concerned, and with



improvement to the good humor of the company, it set the appetite the keener to such conversations. And I am persuaded, that had Reason herself been to judge of her own interest, she would have thought she received more advantage in the main from that easy and familiar way, than from the usual stiff adherence to a particular opinion.

But perhaps you may still be in the same humor of not believing me in earnest. You may continue to tell me, I affect to be paradoxical, in commending a conversation as advantageous to reason, which ended in such a total uncertainty of what reason had seemingly so well established.

To this I answer, That, according to the notion I have of Reason, neither the written treatises of the learned, nor the set discourses of the eloquent, are able of themselves to teach the use of it. It is the habit alone of reasoning which can make a reasoner. And men can never be better invited to the habit, than when they find pleasure in it. A freedom of raillery, a liberty in decent language to question every thing, and an allowance of unravelling or refuting any argument, without offence to the arguer, are the only terms which can render such speculative conversations any way agreeable. For, to say truth, they have been rendered burdensome to mankind, by the strictness of the laws prescribed to them, and by the prevailing pedantry and bigotry of those who reign in them, and assume to themselves to be dictators in these provinces.



Semper ego auditor tantum<sup>1</sup>! is as natural a case of complaint in divinity, in morals, and in philosophy, as it was of old the satirist's in poetry. Vicissitude is a mighty law of discourse, and mightily longed for by mankind. In matter of reason, more is done in a minute or two, by way of question and reply, than by a continued discourse of whole hours. Orations are fit only to move the passions: and the power of declamation is, to terrify, exalt, ravish, or delight, rather than satisfy or instruct. A free conference is a close fight. The other way, in comparison to it, is merely a brandishing, or beating the air. To be obstructed, therefore, and manacled in conferences, and to be confined to hear orations on certain subjects, must needs give us a distaste, and render the subjects so managed as disagreeable as the managers. Men had rather reason upon trifles, so they may reason freely, and without the imposition of authority, than on the usefulest and best subjects in the world, where they are held under a restraint or fear.

Nor is it a wonder that men are generally such faint reasoners, and care so little to argue strictly on any trivial subject in company; when they dare so little exert their reason in greater matters, and are forced to argue lamely, where they have need of the greatest activity and strength. The same thing therefore happens here as in strong and healthy bodies, which are

<sup>1</sup> Juv. sat. 1.



debarred their natural exercise, and confined in a narrow space. They are forced to use odd gestures and contortions. They have a sort of action, and move still, though with the worst grace imaginable. For the animal spirits, in such sound and active limbs, cannot lie dead, or without employment. And thus the natural free spirits of ingenious men, if imprisoned and controlled, will find out other ways of motion to relieve themselves in their constraint; and, whether it be in burlesque, mimicry, or buffoonery, they will be glad at any rate to vent themselves, and be revenged on their constrainters.

If men are forbid to speak their minds seriously on certain subjects, they will do it ironically. If they are forbid to speak at all upon such subjects, or if they find it really dangerous to do so, they will then redouble their disguise, involve themselves in mysteriousness, and talk so as hardly to be understood, or at least not plainly interpreted, by those who are disposed to do them a mischief. And thus raillery is brought more in fashion, and runs into an extreme. It is the persecuting spirit has raised the bantering one: and want of liberty may account for want of a true politeness, and for the corruption or wrong use of pleasantry and humor.

If in this respect we strain the just measure of what we call urbanity, and are apt sometimes to take a buffooning rustic air, we may thank the ridiculous solemnity and sour humor of our



pedagogues : or rather they may thank themselves, if they in particular meet with the heaviest of this kind of treatment. For it will naturally fall heaviest, where the constraint has been the severest. The greater the weight is, the bitterer will be the satire. The higher the slavery, the more exquisite the buffoonery.

That this is really so, may appear by looking on those countries where the spiritual tyranny is highest. For the greatest of buffoons are the Italians : and in their writings, in their freer sort of conversations, on their theatres, and in their streets, buffoonery and burlesque are in the highest vogue. It is the only manner in which the poor, cramped wretches can discharge a free thought. We must yield to them the superiority in this sort of wit. For what wonder is it, if we, who have more of liberty, have less dexterity in that egregious way of raillery and ridicule?

#### S E C T. V.

**I**T is for this reason, I verily believe, that the ancients discover so little of this spirit, and that there is hardly such a thing found as mere burlesque in any authors of the politer ages. The manner indeed in which they treated the very gravest subjects, was somewhat different from that of our days. Their treatises were generally in a free and familiar style. They chose to give



us the representation of real discourse and converse by treating their subjects in the way of dialogue and free debate<sup>1</sup>. The scene was commonly laid at table, or in the public walks or meeting-places; and the usual wit and humor of their real discourses appeared in those of their own composing. And this was fair. For without wit and humor, reason can hardly have its proof, or be distinguished. The magisterial voice and high strain of the pedagogue, commands reverence and awe. It is of admirable use to keep understandings at a distance, and out of reach. The other manner, on the contrary, gives the fairest hold, and suffers an antagonist to use his full strength hand to hand, upon even ground.

It is not to be imagined what advantage the reader has, when he can thus cope with his author, who is willing to come on a fair stage with him, and exchange the tragic buskin for an easier and more natural gait and habit. Grimace and tone are mighty helps to imposture. And many a formal piece of sophistry holds proof under a severe brow, which would not pass under an easy one. It was the saying of an ancient sage<sup>2</sup>,  
 “ That humor was the only test of gravity, and  
 “ gravity of humor. For a subject which would  
 “ not bear raillery was suspicious; and a jest

<sup>1</sup> See Advice to an author, part 1. § 3. in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> *Gorgias Leontinus*, apud *Arist. Rhetor. lib. 3. cap. 18.*  
 τὴν μὲν σπέρην διασείρειν γέλωτι, τὸν δὲ γέλωτα σπέρῃ,  
 which the translator renders, *Seria risu, risum seriis discutere.*



“ which would not bear a serious examination,  
 “ was certainly false wit.”

But some gentlemen there are so full of the spirit of bigotry, and false zeal, that when they hear principles examined, sciences and arts inquired into, and matters of importance treated with this frankness of humor, they imagine presently that all professions must fall to the ground, all establishments come to ruin, and nothing orderly or decent be left standing in the world. They fear, or pretend to fear, that religion itself will be endangered by this free way; and are therefore as much alarmed at this liberty in private conversation, and under prudent management, as if it were grossly used in public company, or before the solemnest assembly. But the case, as I apprehend it, is far different. For you are to remember, my friend! that I am writing to you in defence only of the liberty of the club, and of that sort of freedom which is taken amongst gentlemen and friends, who know one another perfectly well. And that it is natural for me to defend liberty, with this restriction, you may infer from the very notion I have of liberty itself.

It is surely a violation of the freedom of public assemblies, for any one to take the chair, who is neither called nor invited to it. To start questions, or manage debates, which offend the public ear, is to be wanting in that respect which is due to common society. Such subjects should either not be treated at all in public, or in such a manner as to occasion no scandal or disturbance. The public is



not, on any account, to be laughed at to its face, or so reprehended for its follies, as to make it think itself contemned. And what is contrary to good-breeding, is in this respect as contrary to liberty. It belongs to men of slavish principles, to affect a superiority over the vulgar, and to despise the multitude. The lovers of mankind respect and honor conventions and societies of men. And in mixed company, and places where men are met promiscuously on account of diversion or affairs, it is an imposition and hardship, to force them to hear what they dislike, and to treat of matters in a dialect which many who are present have perhaps been never used to. It is a breach of the harmony of public conversation, to take things in such a key as is above the common reach, puts others to silence, and robs them of their privilege of turn. But as to private society, and what passes in select companies, where friends meet knowingly, and with that very design of exercising their wit, and looking freely into all subjects, I see no pretence for any one to be offended at the way of raillery and humor, which is the very life of such conversations, the only thing which makes good company, and frees it from the formality of business, and the tutorage and dogmaticalness of the schools.



## S E C T. VI.

**T**O return therefore to our argument: If the best of our modern conversations are apt to run chiefly upon trifles; if rational discourses especially those of a deeper speculation, have lost their credit, and are in disgrace because of their formality; there is reason for more allowance in the way of humor and gaiety. An easier method of treating these subjects, will make them more agreeable and familiar. To dispute about them, will be the same as about other matters. They need not spoil good company, or take from the ease or pleasure of a polite conversation. And the oftener these conversations are renewed, the better will be their effect. We shall grow better reasoners, by reasoning pleasantly, and at our ease; taking up, or laying down these subjects, as we fancy. So that, upon the whole, I must own to you, I cannot be scandalized at the raillery you took notice of, nor at the effect it had upon our company. The humor was agreeable, and the pleasant confusion which the conversation ended in, is at this time as pleasant to me upon reflection; when I consider, that instead of being discouraged from resuming the debate, we were so much the readier to meet again at any time, and dispute upon the same subjects, even with more ease and satisfaction than before.

We



We had been a long while entertained, you know, upon the subject of morality and religion. And amidst the different opinions started and maintained by several of the parties, with great life and ingenuity, one or other would every now and then take the liberty to appeal to Common Sense. Every one allowed the appeal, and was willing to stand the trial. No one but was assured common sense would justify him. But when issue was joined, and the cause examined at the bar, there could be no judgment given. The parties, however, were not less forward in renewing their appeal, on the very next occasion which presented. No one would offer to call the authority of the court in question; till a gentleman, whose good understanding was never yet brought in doubt, desired the company very gravely, that they would tell him what common sense was.

“If by the word sense we were to understand  
 “opinion and judgment, and by the word com-  
 “mon the generality, or any considerable part  
 “of mankind, it would be hard (he said) to  
 “discover where the subject of common sense  
 “could lie. For that which was according to  
 “the sense of one part of mankind, was against  
 “the sense of another. And if the majority were  
 “to determine common sense, it would change  
 “as often as men changed. That which was  
 “according to common sense to-day, would be  
 “the contrary to-morrow, or soon after.”

But notwithstanding the different judgments of



mankind in most subjects, there were some, however, in which it was supposed they all agreed, and had the same thoughts in common. — The question was asked still, Where? “For whatever  
 “ was of any moment, it was supposed, might  
 “ be reduced under the head of religion, policy,  
 “ or morals.

“ Of the differences in Religion there was  
 “ no occasion to speak; the case was so fully  
 “ known to all, and so feelingly understood by  
 “ Christians, in particular, among themselves.  
 “ They had made sound experiment upon one  
 “ another; each party in their turn. No en-  
 “ deavours had been wanting on the side of any  
 “ particular sect. Whichever chanced to have  
 “ the power, failed not of putting all means in  
 “ execution, to make their private sense the pub-  
 “ lic one. But all in vain. Common sense was  
 “ as hard still to determine as catholic or ortho-  
 “ dox. What with one was inconceivable mys-  
 “ tery, to another was of easy comprehension.  
 “ What to one was absurdity, to another was  
 “ demonstration.

“ As for Policy; what sense, or whose, could  
 “ be called common, was equally a question. If  
 “ plain British or Dutch sense were right, Turkish  
 “ and French sense must certainly be very wrong.  
 “ And as mere nonsense as passive obedience  
 “ seemed, we found it to be the common sense  
 “ of a great party amongst ourselves, a greater  
 “ party in Europe, and perhaps the greatest part  
 “ of all the world besides.



“ As for Morals; the difference, if possible,  
 “ was still wider. For, without considering the  
 “ opinions and customs of the many barbarous  
 “ and illiterate nations, we saw that even the few  
 “ who had attained to riper letters, and to phi-  
 “ losophy, could never as yet agree on one and  
 “ the same system, or acknowledge the same  
 “ moral principles. And some even of our most  
 “ admired modern philosophers, had fairly told  
 “ us, that virtue and vice had, after all, no other  
 “ law or measure than mere fashion and vogue.”

It might have appeared perhaps unfair in our friends, had they treated only the graver subjects in this manner, and suffered the lighter to escape. For in the gayer part of life, our follies are as solemn as in the most serious. The fault is, we carry the laugh but half way. The false earnest is ridiculed, but the false jest passes secure, and becomes as errant deceit as the other. Our diversions, our plays, our amusements become solemn. We dream of happinesses, and possessions, and enjoyments, in which we have no understanding, no certainty; and yet we pursue these as the best known and most certain things in the world. There is nothing so foolish and deluding as a partial scepticism<sup>1</sup>. For whilst the doubt is cast only on one side, the certainty grows so much stronger on the other. Whilst only one face of folly appears ridiculous, the other grows more solemn and deceiving.

<sup>1</sup> See Rhapsody, part 2. § 1. parag. 16. in vol. 2.



But it was not thus with our friends. They seemed better critics, and more ingenious and fair in their way of questioning received opinions, and exposing the ridicule of things. And if you will allow me to carry on their humor, I will venture to make the experiment throughout; and try what certain knowledge or assurance of things may be recovered, in that very way, by which all certainty, you thought, was lost, and an endless scepticism introduced.



## P A R T II.

## S E C T. I.

**I**F a native of Ethiopia were on a sudden transported into Europe, and placed either at Paris or Venice at a time of carnival, when the general face of mankind was disguised, and almost every creature wore a mask; it is probable he would for some time be at a stand, before he discovered the cheat; not imagining, that a whole people could be so fantastical, as, upon agreement, at an appointed time, to transform themselves by variety of habits, and make it a solemn practice to impose on one another, by this universal confusion of characters and persons. Though he might at first perhaps have looked upon this with a serious eye, it would be hardly possible for him to hold his countenance, when he had perceived what was carrying on. The Europeans, on their side, might laugh perhaps at this simplicity. But our Ethiopian would certainly laugh with better reason. It is easy to see which of the two would be ridiculous; for he who laughs, and is himself ridiculous, bears a double share of ridicule. However, should it so happen, that, in the transport of ridicule, our Ethiopian, having his head still running upon masks, and knowing nothing of the fair com-



plexion and common dress of the Europeans, should, upon the sight of a natural face and habit, laugh just as heartily as before; would not he in his turn become ridiculous, by carrying the jest too far; when by a silly presumption he took nature for mere art, and mistook perhaps a man of sobriety and sense for one of those ridiculous mummers?

There was a time when men were accountable only for their actions and behaviour. Their opinions were left to themselves. They had liberty to differ in these, as in their faces. Every one took the air and look which was natural to him. But, in process of time, it was thought decent to mend men's countenances, and render their intellectual complexions uniform, and of a sort. Thus the magistrate became a dresser, and in his turn was dressed too, as he deserved; when he had given up his power to a new order of tiremen. But though, in this extraordinary conjuncture, it was agreed that there was only one certain and true dress, one single peculiar air, to which it was necessary all people should conform; yet the misery was, that neither the magistrate, nor the tiremen themselves, could resolve, which of the various modes was the exact true one. Imagine now, what the effect of this must needs be; when men became persecuted thus on every side about their air and feature, and were put to their shifts how to adjust and compose their mien, according to the right mode; when a thousand models, a thousand patterns of dress, were current, and



altered every now and then, upon occasion, according to fashion and the humor of the times. Judge whether men's countenances were not like to grow constrained, and the natural visage of mankind, by this habit, distorted, convulsed, and rendered hardly knowable.

But as unnatural or artificial as the general face of things may have been rendered by this unhappy care of dress, and over-tenderness for the safety of complexions; we must not therefore imagine, that all faces are alike besmeared or plaistered. All is not fucus, or mere varnish. Nor is the face of truth less fair and beautiful, for all the counterfeit visors which have been put upon her. We must remember the carnival, and what the occasion has been of this wild concourse and medley; who were the institutors of it; and to what purpose men were thus set a-work and amused. We may laugh sufficiently at the original cheat; and, if pity will suffer us, may make ourselves diversion enough with the folly and madness of those who are thus caught, and practised on, by these impostures. But we must remember withal our Ethiopian, and beware, lest by taking plain nature for a visor, we become more ridiculous than the people whom we ridicule. Now, if a jest or ridicule thus strained, be capable of leading the judgment so far astray, it is probable that an excess of fear or horror may work the same effect.

Had it been your fortune, my friend! to have



lived in Asia at the time when the Magi<sup>r</sup>, by an egregious imposture, got possession of the empire, no doubt you would have had a detestation of the act: and perhaps the very persons of the men might have grown so odious to you, that, after all the cheats and abuses they had committed, you might have seen them dispatched with as relentless an eye as our later European ancestors saw the destruction of a like politic body of conjurers, the knights templars; who were almost become an over-match for the civil sovereign. Your indignation perhaps might have carried you to propose the razing all monuments and memorials of these magicians. You might have resolved not to leave so much as their houses standing. But if it had happened, that these magicians, in the time of their dominion, had made any collection of books, or compiled any themselves, in which they had treated of philosophy, or morals, or any other science, or part of learning; would you have carried your resentment so far, as to have extirpated these also, and condemned every opinion or doctrine they had espoused, for no other reason than merely because they had espoused it? Hardly a Scythian, a Tartar, or a Goth, would act or reason so absurdly. Much less would you, my friend! have carried on this Magophony, or priest-massacre, with such a barbarous zeal. For, in good earnest to destroy a philosophy in hatred to a man, implies as errant a Tartar notion, as to

<sup>r</sup> Misc. 2. chap. 1. parag. 25. in vol. 3.



destroy or murder a man, in order to plunder him of his wit, and get the inheritance of his understanding.

I must confess, indeed, that had all the institutions, statues, and regulations of this ancient hierarchy, resembled the fundamental one<sup>2</sup>, of the order itself, they might with a great deal of justice have been suppressed: for one cannot without some abhorrence read that law of theirs,

<sup>3</sup> *Nam Magus ex matre et gnato gignatur oportet.*

But the conjurers, (as we will rather suppose), having considered that they ought in their principle to appear as fair as possible to the world, the better to conceal their practice, found it highly for their interest, to espouse some excellent moral rules; and establish the very best maxims of this kind. They thought it for their advantage perhaps, on their first setting out, to recommend the greatest purity of religion, the greatest integrity of life and manners. They may perhaps too, in general, have preached up charity and good-will. They may have set to view the fairest face of human nature; and together with their by-laws and political institutions, have interwove the honestest morals and best doctrine in the world.

How therefore should we have behaved ourselves in this affair? How should we have car-

<sup>2</sup> Πέρσαι δὲ ἢ μάλιστα αὐτῶν οἱ σοφίαν ἀσκεῖν δοκῶντες οἱ Μάγοι, γαμῶσι τὰς μητέρας. Sext. Empir. Pyr. lib. 3. cap. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Catull. 87.



ried ourselves towards this order of men, at the time of the discovery of their cheat, and ruin of their empire? Should we have fallen to work instantly with their systems, struck at their opinions and doctrines without distinction, and erected a contrary philosophy in their teeth? Should we have flown at every religious and moral principle, denied every natural and social affection, and rendered men as much wolves<sup>4</sup> as was possible to one another, whilst we described them such; and endeavoured to make them see themselves by far more monstrous and corrupt, than with the worst intentions it was ever possible for the worst of them to become? — This, you will say, doubtless would have been a very preposterous part, and could never have been acted by other than mean spirits, such as had been held in awe, and overfrighted by the Magi<sup>5</sup>.

And yet an able and witty philosopher<sup>6</sup> of our nation was, we know, of late years, so possessed

<sup>4</sup> *Infra*, part 3. sect. 3. parag. 5.; and *Rhaps.* part 2. sect. 4. parag. ult. in vol. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Misc.* 2. chap. 2. parag. 2, 3, 4. in the notes, in vol. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Mr *Hobbes*, who thus expresses himself: *By reading of these Greek and Latin authors, men, from their childhood, have gotten a habit (under a false show of liberty) of favoring tumults, and of licentious controuling the actions of their sovereigns.* *Leviathan*, part 2. chap. 21. p. 111. By this reasoning of Mr *Hobbes*, it should follow, that there can never be any tumults or deposing of sovereigns at *Constantinople*, or in *Mogul*. See again, p. 171. and 377. and what he intimates to his prince (p. 193.) concerning this extirpation of ancient literature, in favor of his *Leviathan* hypothesis, and new philosophy.



with a horror of this kind, that, both with respect to politics and morals, he directly acted in this spirit of massacre. The fright he took upon the sight of the then governing powers, who unjustly assumed the authority of the people, gave him such an abhorrence of all popular government, and of the very notion of liberty itself, that to extinguish it for ever, he recommends the very extinguishing of letters, and exhorts princes not to spare so much as an ancient Roman or Greek historian. — Is not this in truth somewhat Gothic? And has not our philosopher, in appearance, something of the savage, that he should use philosophy and learning as the Scythians are said to have used Anacharsis and others, for having visited the wife of Greece, and learned the manners of a polite people?

His quarrel with religion was the same as with liberty. The same times gave him the same terror in this other kind. He had nothing before his eyes besides the ravage of enthusiasm, and the artifice of those who raised and conducted that spirit. And the good sociable man, as savage and unsociable as he would make himself and all mankind appear by his philosophy, exposed himself during his life, and took the utmost pains, that after his death we might be delivered from the occasion of these terrors. He did his utmost to show us, “that, both in religion and  
“ morals, we were imposed on by our govern-  
“ ors; that there was nothing which by nature  
“ inclined us either way; nothing which natu-



“ rally drew us to the love of what was without, “ or beyond ourselves’ : ” though the love of such great truths and sovereign maxims as he imagined these to be, made him the most laborious of all men in composing systems of this kind for our use; and forced him, notwithstanding his natural fear, to run continually the highest risk of being a martyr for our deliverance.

Give me leave therefore, my friend! on this occasion, to prevent your seriousness, and assure you, that there is no such mighty danger as we are apt to imagine from these fierce persecutors of superstition, who are so jealous of every religious or moral principle. Whatever savages they may appear in philosophy, they are in their common capacity as civil persons as one can wish. Their free communicating of their principles may witness for them. It is the height of sociableness to be thus friendly and communicative.

If the principles, indeed, were concealed from us, and made a mystery, they might become considerable. Things are often made so, by being kept as secrets of a sect or party; and nothing helps this more than the antipathy and shyness of a contrary party. If we fall presently into horrors, and consternation, upon the hearing maxims which are thought poisonous, we are in no disposition to use that familiar and easy part of reason, which is the best antidote. The

<sup>2</sup> Inq. concerning virtue, book 2. part 1. § 1. parag. 6. &c. in vol. 2.



only poison to reason, is passion. For false reasoning is soon redressed, where passion is removed. But if the very hearing certain propositions of philosophy be sufficient to move our passion, it is plain, the poison has already gained on us, and we are effectually prevented in the use of our reasoning faculty.

Were it not for the prejudices of this kind what should hinder us from diverting ourselves with the fancy of one of these modern reformers we have been speaking of? What should we say to one of these anti-zealots, who, in the zeal of such a cool philosophy, should assure us faithfully, "That we were the most mistaken men  
 " in the world, to imagine there was any such  
 " thing as natural faith or justice: for that it was  
 " only force and power which constituted right:  
 " that there was no such thing in reality as  
 " virtue; no principle of order in things above,  
 " or below; no secret charm or force of nature,  
 " by which every one was made to operate,  
 " willingly or unwillingly, towards public good,  
 " and punished and tormented if he did otherwise?" — Is not this the very charm itself? Is not the gentleman at this instant under the power of it? — "Sir! the philosophy you have descended to reveal to us, is most extraordinary.  
 " We are beholden to you for your instruction.  
 " But, pray, whence is this zeal in our behalf?  
 " What are we to you? Are you our father?  
 " Or if you were, why this concern for us? Is  
 " there then such a thing as natural affection? If



“ not, why all this pains, why all this danger on  
 “ our account? Why not keep this secret to  
 “ yourself? Of what advantage is it to you, to  
 “ deliver us from the cheat? The more are taken  
 “ in it, the better. It is directly against your  
 “ interest to undeceive us, and let us know that  
 “ only private interest governs you; and that no-  
 “ thing nobler, or of a larger kind, should go-  
 “ vern us, whom you converse with. Leave us  
 “ to ourselves, and to that notable art by which  
 “ we are happily tamed, and rendered thus mild  
 “ and sheepish; it is not fit we should know,  
 “ that by nature we are all wolves. Is it pos-  
 “ sible that one who has really discovered himself  
 “ such, should take pains to communicate such  
 “ a discovery?”

## S E C T. II.

**I**N reality, my friend! a severe brow may  
 well be spared on this occasion; when we are  
 put thus upon the defence of common honesty,  
 by such fair honest gentlemen, who are in prac-  
 tice so different from what they would appear  
 in speculation. Knaves I know there are in notion  
 and principle, as well as in practice; who think  
 all honesty, as well as religion, a mere cheat;  
 and, by a very consistent reasoning, have re-  
 solved deliberately to do whatever by power or  
 art they are able, for their private advantage.



But such as these never open themselves in friendship to others. They have no such passion for truth, or love for mankind. They have no quarrel with religion or morals; but know what use to make of both, upon occasion. If they ever discover their principles, it is only at unawares. They are sure to preach honesty, and go to church.

On the other side, the gentlemen for whom I am apologizing, cannot, however, be called hypocrites. They speak as ill of themselves as they possibly can. If they have hard thoughts of human nature, it is a proof still of their humanity, that they give such warning to the world. If they represent men by nature treacherous and wild, it is out of care for mankind; lest by being too tame and trusting, they should easily be caught.

Impostors naturally speak the best of human nature, that they may the easier abuse it. These gentlemen, on the contrary, speak the worst: and had rather they themselves should be censured with the rest, than that a few should by imposture prevail over the many. For it is opinion of goodness<sup>1</sup> which creates easiness of trust: and by trust we are betrayed to power; our very reason being thus captivated by those in whom we come insensibly to have an implicit faith. But supposing one another to be by nature such very savages, we shall take care to

<sup>1</sup> Rhaps. part 2. § 5. parag. 21. in vol. 2.; and Misc. 2. ch. 3. parag. 36. in vol. 3.



come less in one another's power; and apprehending power to be insatiably coveted by all, we shall the better fence against the evil; not by giving all into one hand, (as the champion of this cause would have us), but, on the contrary, by a right division and balance of power, and by the restraint of good laws and limitations, which may secure the public liberty.

Should you therefore ask me, whether I really thought these gentlemen were fully persuaded of the principles they so often advance in company? I should tell you, that though I would not absolutely arraign the gentlemen's sincerity, yet there was something of mystery in the case more than was imagined. The reason, perhaps, why men of wit delight so much to espouse these paradoxical systems, is not in truth that they are so fully satisfied with them, but in a view the better to oppose some other systems, which by their fair appearance, have helped, they think, to bring mankind under subjection. They imagine, that by this general scepticism, which they would introduce, they shall better deal with the dogmatical spirit which prevails in some particular subjects. And when they have accustomed men to bear contradiction in the main, and hear the nature of things disputed at large; it may be safer, they conclude, to argue separately, upon certain nice points in which they are not altogether so well satisfied. So that from hence perhaps you may still better apprehend, why, in conversation,



conversation, the spirit of raillery prevails so much, and notions are taken up, for no reason besides their being odd, and out of the way.

### S E C T. III.

**B**UT let who will condemn the humor thus described; for my part, I am in no such apprehension from this sceptical kind of wit. Men indeed may, in a serious way, be so wrought on, and confounded, by different modes of opinion, different systems and schemes imposed by authority, that they may wholly lose all notion or comprehension of truth. I can easily apprehend what effect awe has over men's understandings. I can very well suppose, men may be frightened out of their wits: but I have no apprehension they should be laughed out of them. I can hardly imagine, that in a pleasant way they should ever be talked out of their love for society, or reasoned out of humanity and common sense. A mannerly wit can hurt no cause or interest for which I am in the least concerned: and philosophical speculations politely managed, can never surely render mankind more unsociable or uncivilized. This is not the quarter from whence I can possibly expect an inroad of savageness and barbarity. And, by the best of my observation, I have learned, that virtue is never such a sufferer, by being contested, as by being betrayed.



My fear is not so much from its witty antagonists, who give it exercise, and put it on its defence, as from its tender nurses, who are apt to overlay it, and kill it with excess of care and cherishing.

I have known a building, which, by the officiousness of the workmen, has been so shored and screwed up, on the side where they pretended it had a leaning, that it has at last been turned the contrary way, and overthrown. There has something perhaps of this kind happened in morals. Men have not been contented to show the natural advantages of honesty and virtue. They have rather lessened these, the better, as they thought, to advance another foundation. They have made virtue so mercenary a thing, and have talked so much of its rewards, that one can hardly tell what there is in it, after all, which can be worth rewarding. For to be bribed only, or terrified into an honest practice, bespeaks little of real honesty or worth. We may make, it is true, whatever bargain we think fit; and may bestow in favor what overplus we please. But there can be no excellence or wisdom in voluntarily rewarding what is neither estimable nor deserving. And if virtue be not really estimable in itself, I can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.

If the love of doing good be not, of itself, a good and right inclination; I know not how there can possibly be such a thing as goodness



or virtue. If the inclination be right, it is a perverting of it, to apply it solely to the reward, and make us conceive such wonders of the grace and favor which is to attend virtue; when there is so little shown of the intrinsic worth or value of the thing itself.

I could be almost tempted to think, that the true reason why some of the most heroic virtues have so little notice taken of them in our holy religion, is, because there would have been no room left for disinterestedness, had they been entitled to a share of that infinite reward which providence has by revelation assigned to other duties. Private friendship<sup>1</sup>, and zeal for the

<sup>1</sup> By *private friendship* no fair reader can here suppose is meant that common benevolence and charity which every Christian is obliged to show towards all men, and in particular towards his fellow-Christians, his neighbour, brother, and kindred, of whatever degree; but that peculiar relation which is formed by a consent and harmony of minds, by mutual esteem, and reciprocal tenderness and affection; and which we emphatically call a FRIENDSHIP. Such was that between the two Jewish heroes after-mentioned, whose love and tenderness was *surpassing that of women*, [2 Samuel, chap. 1.] Such were those friendships described so frequently by poets, between *Pylades* and *Orestes*, *Theseus* and *Pirithous*, with many others. Such were those between philosophers, heroes, and the greatest of men; between *Socrates* and *Antisthenes*, *Plato* and *Dion*, *Epaminondas* and *Pelopidas*, *Scipio* and *Laelius*, *Cato* and *Brutus*, *Thrasea* and *Helvidius*. And such there may have lately been, and are still perhaps in our own age; though envy suffers not the few examples of this kind to be remarked in public. The author's meaning is indeed so plain of itself, that it needs no explanatory apology to satisfy an impartial



public, and our country, are virtues purely voluntary in a Christian. They are no essential

reader. As for others who object the singularity of the assertion, as differing, they suppose, from what our reverend doctors in religion commonly maintain, they may read what the learned and pious Bishop *Taylor* says in his treatise of friendship. “ You inquire, ” says he, “ how far a dear and a perfect friendship “ is authorized by the principles of Christianity? To this I answer, That the word *friendship*, in the sense we commonly “ mean by it, is not so much as named in the New Testament; “ and our religion takes no notice of it. You think it strange; “ but read on, before you spend so much as the beginning of a “ passion or a wonder upon it. There is mention of *friendship* “ of the world; and it is said to be *enmity with God*: but the “ word is no where else named, or to any other purpose, in all “ the New Testament. It speaks of friends often; but by *friends* “ are meant our acquaintance, or our kindred, the relatives of “ our family, or our fortune, or our sect, &c. — And I think “ I have reason to be confident, that the word *friend* (speaking “ of human intercourse) is not otherwise used in the gospels, or “ epistles, or acts of the apostles. ” And afterwards, “ Christian “ charity (says he) is friendship to *all* the world: and when “ friendships were the noblest things in the world, charity was “ little, like the sun drawn in at a chink, or his beams drawn “ into the centre of a burning-glass: but Christian charity is “ friendship expanded like the face of the sun, when it mounts “ above the eastern hills. ” In reality, the good Bishop draws all his notions as well as examples of private friendship from the Heathen world, or from the times preceding Christianity. And, after citing a *Greek* author, he immediately adds, “ Of such “ immortal, abstracted, pure friendships, indeed there is no great “ plenty; but they who are the same to their friend ἀπόπροθεν, “ when he is in another country, or in another world, are fit to “ preserve the sacred fire for eternal sacrifices, and to perpetuate “ the memory of those exemplary friendships of the best men “ which have filled the world with history and wonder: for in “ no other sense but this can it be true, that friendships are pure “ loves, regarding to do good more than to receive it. He that



parts of his charity. He is not so tied to the affairs of this life ; nor is he obliged to enter into such engagements with this lower world , as are of no help to him in acquiring a better. His conversation is in heaven. Nor has he occasion for such supernumerary cares or embarrassments here on earth , as may obstruct his way thither , or retard him in the careful task of working out his own salvation. If nevertheless any portion of reward be reserved hereafter , for the generous part of a patriot, or that of a thorough friend ; this is still behind the curtain, and happily concealed from us ; that we may be the more deserving of it, when it comes.

It appears indeed under the Jewish dispensation, that each of these virtues had their illustrious examples, and were in some manner recommended to us as honorable, and worthy our imitation. Even Saul himself, as ill a prince as he is represented, appears, both living and dying, to have been respected and praised for the love he bore his native country. And the love which was so remarkable between his son and his successor, gives us a noble view of a disinterested friendship, at least on one side. But the heroic virtue of these persons had only the common reward of praise attributed to it, and could not claim a future recompence, under a religion which taught no future state, nor exhibited any rewards or punishments,

“ is a friend after death, hopes not for a recompence from his  
 “ friend, and makes no bargain either for fame or love, but is  
 “ rewarded with the conscience and satisfaction of doing bravely.”



besides such as were temporal, and had respect to the written law.

And thus the Jews as well as Heathens were left to their philosophy, to be instructed in the sublime part of virtue, and induced by reason to that which was never enjoined them by command. No premium or penalty being enforced in these cases, the disinterested part subsisted, the virtue was a free choice, and the magnanimity of the act was left entire. He who would be generous, had the means. He who would frankly serve his friend, or country, at the expense even of his life, might do it on fair terms<sup>2</sup>. “*Dulce & decorum est*”<sup>3</sup> was his sole reason. It was inviting and becoming; it was good and honest. And that this is still a good reason, and according to common sense, I will endeavour to satisfy you. For I should think myself very ridiculous, to be angry with any one for thinking me dishonest, if I could give no account of my honesty, nor show upon what principle I differed from a knave<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> *Peradventure* (says the holy apostle) *for a good man one would even dare to die*, τὰ χατὶς ἢ τολμᾶ, ἔσθ. Rom. chap. 5. v. 7. This the apostle judiciously supposes to belong to human nature; though he is so far from founding any precept upon it, that he ushers his private opinion with a very dubious *peradventure*.

<sup>3</sup> Horat. lib. 3. od. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Infra*, part 4. § 1. parag. 3, 4.; and *Advice to an author*, part 1. § 2. in this volume.



## P A R T III.

## S E C T. I.

THE Roman satirist may be thought more than ordinarily satirical, when speaking of the nobility and court, he is so far from a lowing them to be the standard of politeness and good sense, that he makes them in a manner the reverse :

*Rarus enim ferme sensus communis in illa Fortuna*<sup>1</sup> —

Some of the most ingenious commentators<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Juv. sat. 8. v. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Viz. the two Casaubons, Is. and Mer. Salmasius, and our English Gataker. See the first in Capitolinus, vit. M. Ant. sub finem; the second, in his comment on M. Ant. lib. 1. § 13. & 16.; Gataker on the same place; and Salmasius, in the same life of Capitolinus, at the end of his annotations. The Greek word is κοινονημοσύνη; which Salmasius interprets, moderatam, usitatam, et ordinariam hominis mentem, quæ in commune quodammodo consulit, nec omnia ad commodum suum refert, respectumque etiam habet eorum cum quibus versatur, modeste modiceque de se sentiens. At contra inflati et superbi omnes se sibi tantum suisque commodis natos arbitrantur, et præ se cæteros contemnunt et negligunt; et hi sunt qui sensum communem non habere recte dici possunt. Nam ita sensum communem accipit Juvenalis, sat. 8. Rarus enim ferme SENSUS COMMUNIS, &c. Φιλανθρωπίαν et χρηστότητα Galenus vocat; quam Marcus de se loquens κοινονημοσύνην; et alibi, ubi de eadem re loquitur, μετρίότητα καὶ εὐγνωμοσύνην, qua gratiam illi



however, interpret this very differently from what is generally apprehended. They make this com-

*fecerit Marcus simul eundi ad Germanicum bellum, ac sequendi se.* In the same manner *Isaac Casaubon*: *Herodianus* (says he) calls this the τὸ μέτριον καὶ ἰσόμετρον. Subjicit vero *Antoninus* quasi hanc vocem interpretans, καὶ τὸ ἐφείσθαι τοῖς φίλοις μήτε συνδειπνεῖν αὐτῷ πάντως, μήτε συναποδημεῖν ἐπάναγκες. This, I am persuaded, is the *sensus communis* of *Horace*, (*sat.* 3. *lib.* 1.), which has been unobserved, as far as I can learn, by any of his commentators; it being remarkable withal, that in this early satire of *Horace*, before his latter days, and when his philosophy as yet inclined to the less rigid assertors of virtue, he puts this expression, as may be seen by the whole satire taken together, into the mouth of a *Crispinus*, or some ridiculous mimic of that severe philosophy, to which the coinage of the word κοινονομοσύνη properly belonged. For so the poet again (*sat.* 4. *ῥ.* 77.) uses the word *Sensus*, speaking of those who, without *sense* of manners, or common society, without the least respect or deference to others, press rudely upon their friends, and upon all company in general, without regard to time or place, or any thing besides their selfish and brutish humor.

——— *Haud illud quærentes, num sine Sensu,*  
*Tempore num faciant alieno.* ————— ἀναίσθητῶς,

as old *Lambin* interprets it, though without any other explanation; referring only to the *sensus communis* of *Horace* in that other satire. Thus *Seneca* (*epist.* 105.) *Odium autem ex offensa sic vitabis, neminem laceffendo gratuito: a quo te Sensus Communis tuebitur.* And *Cicero* accordingly, *Justitiæ partes sunt non violare homines: verecundiæ, non offendere.* *lib.* 1. *de off.* It may be objected possibly by some, particularly versed in the philosophy above-mentioned, that the κοῖνος νόμος, to which the κοινονομοσύνη seems to have relation, is of a different meaning. But they will consider withal, how small the distinction was in that philosophy, between the ὑπόληψις, and the vulgar αἰσθησις; how generally *passion* was by those philosophers brought under the head of opinion. And when they consider, besides this, the very formation of the word κοινονομοσύνη, upon the model



mon sense of the poet, by a Greek derivation, to signify sense of public weal, and of the common interest; love of the community or society, natural affection, humanity, obligingness, or that sort of civility which rises from a just sense of the common rights of mankind, and the natural equality there is among those of the same species.

And indeed, if we consider the thing nicely, it must seem somewhat hard in the poet, to have denied wit or ability to a court such as that of Rome, even under a Tiberius or a Nero. But for humanity, or sense of public good, and the common interest of mankind, it was no such deep satire to question whether this was properly the spirit of a court. It was difficult to apprehend what community subsisted among courtiers, or what public between an absolute prince and his slave subjects. And for real society, there could be none between such as had no other sense than that of private good.

Our poet therefore seems not so immoderate in his censure, if we consider it is the heart, rather than the head, he takes to task. When reflecting on a court-education, he thinks it unapt to raise any affection towards a country; and looks upon young princes and lords as the young masters of

of the other femalized virtues, the *ἐυγνωμοσύνη*, *σωφροσύνη*, *δικαιοσύνη*, &c. they will no longer hesitate on this interpretation.

— The reader may perhaps by this note see better why the *Latin* title of *Sensus Communis* has been given to this second treatise. He may observe withal, how the same poet *Juvenal* uses the word *sensus*, in *sat.* 15, *Hæc nostri pars optima sensus.*



the world ; who being indulged in all their passions, and trained up in all manner of licentiousness, have that thorough contempt and disregard of mankind which mankind in a manner deserves, where arbitrary power is permitted, and a tyranny adored.

*Hæc satis ad juvenem, quem nobis fama superbum  
Tradit, et inflatum, plenumque Nerone propinquo<sup>3</sup>.*

A public spirit can come only from a social feeling or sense of partnership with human kind. Now, there are none so far from being partners in this sense, or sharers in this common affection, as they who scarcely know an equal, nor consider themselves as subject to any law of fellowship or community. And thus morality and good government go together. There is no real love of virtue, without the knowledge of public good ; and where absolute power is, there is no Public.

They who live under a tyranny, and have learned to admire its power as sacred and divine, are debauched as much in their religion as in their morals. Public good, according to their apprehension, is as little the measure or rule of government in the universe as in the state. They have scarce a notion of what is good or just, other than as mere will and power have determined. Omnipotence, they think, would hardly be itself, were it not at liberty to dispense with the laws

<sup>3</sup> Juv. sat. 8.



of equity<sup>\*</sup>, and change at pleasure the standard of moral rectitude.

But, notwithstanding the prejudices and corruptions of this kind, it is plain there is something still of a public principle, even where it is most perverted and depressed. The worst of magistracies, the more despotic kind, can show sufficient instances of zeal and affection towards it. Where no other government is known, it seldom fails of having that allegiance and duty paid it, which is owing to a better form. The eastern countries, and many barbarous nations, have been and still are examples of this kind. The personal love they bear their prince, however severe towards them, may show how natural an affection there is towards government and order among mankind. If men have really no public parent, no magistrate in common to cherish and protect them, they will still imagine they have such a one; and, like new-born creatures who have never seen their dam, will fancy one for themselves, and apply (as by nature prompted) to some like form for favor and protection. In the room of a true foster-father and chief, they will take after a false one; and in the room of a legal government and just prince, obey even a tyrant, and endure a whole lineage and succession of such.

As for us Britons, thank heaven, we have a better sense of government delivered to us from

<sup>\*</sup> Advice to an author, part 3. § 1. parag. 21. in this volume.



our ancestors. We have the notion of a Public, and a Constitution; how a legislative and how an executive is modelled. We understand weight and measure in this kind, and can reason justly on the balance of power and property. The maxims we draw from hence, are as evident as those in mathematics. Our increasing knowledge shows us every day more and more what Common Sense is in politics; and this must, of necessity, lead us to understand a like sense in morals; which is the foundation.

It is ridiculous to say, there is any obligation on man to act sociably or honestly, in a formed government, and not in that which is commonly called the state of nature<sup>1</sup>. For, to speak in the fashionable language of our modern philosophy, "society being founded on a compact, the surrender made of every man's private unlimited right, into the hands of the majority, or such as the majority should appoint, was of free choice, and by a promise." Now, the promise itself was made in the state of nature; and that which could make a promise obligatory in the state of nature, must make all other acts of humanity as much our real duty, and natural part. Thus faith, justice, honesty, and virtue, must have been as early as the state of nature, or they could never have been at all. The civil union or confederacy could never make right or wrong, if they subsisted not before. He who

<sup>1</sup> Rhaps. part 2. § 4. parag. 41. 45. &c. in vol. 2.



was free to any villany before his contract, will, and ought to make as free with his contract, when he thinks fit. The natural knave has the same reason to be a civil one; and may dispense with his politic capacity as oft as he sees occasion: it is only his word stands in his way. — A man is obliged to keep his word. Why? Because he has given his word to keep it. — Is not this a notable account of the original of moral justice, and the rise of civil government and allegiance.

## S E C T. II.

**B**UT to pass by these cavils of a philosophy, which speaks so much of nature with so little meaning; we may with justice surely place it as a principle, “That if any thing be natural in any creature, or any kind, it is that which is preservative of the kind itself, and conducing to its welfare and support.” If in original and pure nature, it be wrong to break a promise, or be treacherous; it is as truly wrong to be in any respect inhuman, or any way wanting in our natural part towards human kind. If eating and drinking be natural, herding is so too. If any appetite or sense be natural, the sense of fellowship is the same. If there be any thing of nature in that affection which is between the sexes, the affection is certainly as natural towards the consequent



offspring; and so again between the offspring themselves, as kindred and companions, bred under the same discipline and œconomy. And thus a clan or tribe is gradually formed; a public is recognized; and, besides the pleasure found in social entertainment, language, and discourse, there is so apparent a necessity for continuing this good correspondence and union, that to have no sense or feeling of this kind, no love of country, community, or any thing in common, would be the same as to be insensible even of the plainest means of self-preservation, and most necessary condition of self-enjoyment.

How the wit of man should so puzzle this cause, as to make civil government and society appear a kind of invention, and creature of art, I know not. For my own part, methinks this herding principle, and associating inclination, is seen so natural and strong in most men, that one might readily affirm, it was even from the violence of this passion that so much disorder arose in the general society of mankind.

Universal good, or the interest of the world in general, is a kind of remote philosophical object. That greater community falls not easily under the eye: nor is a national interest, or that of a whole people, or body-politic, so readily apprehended. In less parties, men may be intimately conversant and acquainted with one another. They can there better taste society, and enjoy the common good and interest of a more contracted public. They view the whole



compass and extent of their community; and see, and know particularly, whom they serve, and to what end they associate and conspire. All men have naturally their share of this combining principle: and they who are of the sprightliest and most active faculties, have so large a share of it, that unless it be happily directed by right reason, it can never find exercise for itself in so remote a sphere as that of the body-politic at large. For here perhaps the thousandth part of those whose interests are concerned, are scarce so much as known by sight. No visible band is formed; no strict alliance; but the conjunction is made with different persons, orders, and ranks of men; not sensibly, but in idea; according to that general view or notion of a state or commonwealth.

Thus the social aim is disturbed, for want of certain scope. The close sympathy, and conspiring virtue, is apt to lose itself, for want of direction, in so wide a field. Nor is the passion any where so strongly felt, or vigorously exerted, as in actual conspiracy or war; in which the highest geniuses are often known the forwardest to employ themselves. For the most generous spirits are the most combining. They delight most to move in concert; and feel (if I may say so) in the strongest manner, the force of the confederating charm.

It is strange to imagine, that war, which of all things appears the most savage, should be the passion of the most heroic spirits. But it is



in war that the knot of fellowship is closest drawn. It is in war that mutual succours is most given, mutual danger run, and common affection most exerted and employed. For heroism and philanthropy are almost one and the same. Yet, by a small misguidance of the affection, a lover of mankind becomes a ravager; a hero and deliverer becomes an oppressor and destroyer.

Hence other divisions amongst men. Hence, in the way of peace and civil government, that love of party, and subdivision by cabal. For sedition is a kind of cantonizing already begun within the state. To cantonize is natural, when the society grows vast and bulky: and powerful states have found other advantages in sending colonies abroad, than merely that of having elbow-room at home, or extending their dominion into distant countries. Vast empires are in many respects unnatural; but particularly in this, that be they ever so well constituted, the affairs of many must, in such governments, turn upon a very few; and the relation be less sensible, and in a manner lost, between the magistrate and people, in a body so unwieldy in its limbs, and whose members lie so remote from one another, and distant from the head.

It is in such bodies as these that strong factions are aptest to engender. The associating spirits, for want of exercise, form new movements, and seek a narrower sphere of activity, when they want action in a greater. Thus we have wheels within wheels. And in some  
national



national constitutions (notwithstanding the absurdity in politics) we have one empire within another. Nothing is so delightful as to incorporate. Distinctions of many kinds are invented; religious societies are formed; orders are erected; and their interests espoused and served, with the utmost zeal and passion. Founders and patrons of this sort are never wanting. Wonders are performed, in this wrong social spirit, by those members of separate societies. And the associating genius of man is never better proved, than in those very societies which are formed in opposition to the general one of mankind, and to the real interest of the state.

In short, the very spirit of faction, for the greatest part, seems to be no other than the abuse or irregularity of that social love, and common affection, which is natural to mankind. For the opposite of sociableness is selfishness. And of all characters, the thorough-selfish one is the least forward in taking party. The men of this sort are, in this respect, true men of moderation. They are secure of their temper; and possess themselves too well, to be in danger of entering warmly into any cause, or engaging deeply with any side or faction.



## S E C T. III.

YOU have heard it, my friend ! as a common saying, that interest governs the world. But I believe, whoever looks narrowly into the affairs of it, will find, that passion, humor, caprice, zeal, faction, and a thousand other springs, which are counter to self-interest, have as considerable a part in the movements of this machine. There are more wheels and counter poises in this engine than are easily imagined. It is of too complex a kind, to fall under one simple view, or be explained thus briefly in a word or two. The students of this mechanism must have a very partial eye, to overlook all other motions besides those of the lowest and narrowest compass. It is hard, that in the plan or description of this clock-work, no wheel or balance should be allowed on the side of the better and more enlarged affections; that nothing should be understood to be done in kindness or generosity; nothing in pure good-nature or friendship, or through any social or natural affection of any kind: when perhaps the main springs of this machine will be found to be either these very natural affections themselves, or a compound kind derived from them, and retaining more than one half of their nature.

But here, my friend ! you must not expect that I should draw you up a formal scheme of



the passions<sup>1</sup>, or pretend to show you their genealogy and relation; how they are interwoven with one another, or interfere with our happiness and interest. It would be out of the genius and compass of such a letter as this, to frame a just plan or model, by which you might, with an accurate view, observe what proportion the friendly and natural affections seem to bear in this order of architecture.

Modern projectors, I know, would willingly rid their hands of these natural materials; and would fain build after a more uniform way. They would new-frame the human heart; and have a mighty fancy to reduce all its motions, balances, and weights, to that one principle and foundation of a cool and deliberate selfishness. Men, it seems, are unwilling to think they can be so outwitted and imposed on by nature, as to be made to serve her purposes rather than their own. They are ashamed to be drawn thus out of themselves, and forced from what they esteem their true interest.

There has been in all times a sort of narrow-minded philosophers, who have thought to set this difference to rights, by conquering nature in themselves. A primitive father and founder among these, saw well this power of nature<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> See the fourth treatise, *viz.* *Inquiry concerning virtue*, in vol. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Letter concerning enthusiasm, above, p. 41. *Inquiry concerning virtue*, book 2. part 1. § 1. parag. 6. in vol. 2.; and *Misc.* 2. chap. 1. parag. 6. 10. &c. in vol. 3.



and understood it so far, that he earnestly exhorted his followers neither to beget children, nor serve their country. There was no dealing with nature, it seems, while these alluring objects stood in the way. Relations, friends, countrymen, laws, politic constitutions, the beauty of order and government, and the interest of society and mankind, were objects, which, he well saw, would naturally raise a stronger affection than any which was grounded upon the narrow bottom of mere self. His advice, therefore, not to marry, nor engage at all in the public, was wise, and suitable to his design. There was no way to be truly a disciple of this philosophy, but to leave family, friends, country, and society, to cleave to it. — And, in good earnest, who would not, if it were happiness to do so? — The philosopher, however, was kind, in telling us his thought. It was a token of his fatherly love of mankind.

*Tu pater, et rerum inventor! Tu patria nobis  
Suppeditas præcepta<sup>3</sup>! —*

But the revivers of this philosophy in latter days, appear to be of a lower genius. They seem to have understood less of this force of nature, and thought to alter the thing, by shifting a name. They would so explain all the social passions, and natural affections, as to denominate

<sup>3</sup> Lucret. lib. 3.



them of the selfish kind<sup>4</sup>. Thus civility, hospitality, humanity towards strangers or people in distress, is only a more deliberate selfishness; an honest heart is only a more cunning one; and honesty and good-nature, a more deliberate, or better-regulated self-love. The love of kindred, children, and posterity, is purely love of self, and of one's own immediate blood: as if, by this reckoning, all mankind were not included; all being of one blood, and joined by intermarriages and alliances, as they have been transplanted in colonies, and mixed one with another. And thus love of one's country, and love of mankind, must also be self-love. Magnanimity and courage, no doubt, are modifications of this universal self-love! For courage (says our modern philosopher) is constant anger<sup>5</sup>. And all men (says a witty poet<sup>6</sup>) would be cowards if they durst.

That the poet and the philosopher both were cowards, may be yielded perhaps without dispute. They may have spoken the best of their knowledge. But for true courage, it has so little to do with anger, that there lies always the strongest suspicion against it, where this passion is highest. The true courage is the cool and

<sup>4</sup> Supra, p. 74. and Rhaps. part 2. § 4. parag. ult. in vol. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Sudden courage* (says Mr Hobbes, *Lev.* ch. 6.) is *anger*. Therefore *courage* considered as constant, and belonging to a character, must, in his account, be defined *constant anger*, or *anger constantly returning*.

<sup>6</sup> Lord Rochester. *Satire against man*.



calm. The bravest of men have the least of a brutal bullying insolence; and in the very time of danger are found the most serene, pleasant, and free. Rage, we know, can make a coward forget himself and fight. But what is done in fury or anger, can never be placed to the account of courage. Were it otherwise, woman-kind might claim to be the stoutest sex: for their hatred and anger have ever been allowed the strongest and most lasting.

Other Authors there have been of a yet inferior kind: a sort of distributors and petty retailers of this wit<sup>7</sup>; who have run changes, and divisions, without end, upon this article of self-love. You have the very same thought spun out a hundred ways, and drawn into mottoes and devices, to set forth this riddle, that "act as "disinterestedly or generously as you please, "self still is at the bottom, and nothing else." Now, if these gentlemen, who delight so much in the play of words, but are cautious how they grapple closely with definitions, would tell us only what self-interest was<sup>8</sup>, and determine hap-

<sup>7</sup> The *French* translator supposes, with good reason, that our author, in this passage, had an eye to those sentences or maxims which pass under the name of the Duke *De la Rochefoucault*. He has added withal, the censure of this kind of wit, and of these maxims in particular, by some authors of the same nation. The passages are too long to insert here, though they are otherwise very just and entertaining. That which he has cited of old *Montaigne*, is from the first chapter of his second essay.

<sup>8</sup> Inquiry concerning virtue, book 1. part 2. § 2. parag. 2. book 2. part 1. § 1. parag. 4, 5, 6. *ibid.* § 3. parag. 10. *ibid.* part 2. § 2. parag. 1, 2. &c. in vol. 2.



pinels and good, there would be an end of this enigmatical wit. For in this we should all agree, that happiness was to be pursued, and in fact was always sought after: but whether found in following nature, and giving way to common affection; or in suppressing it, and turning every passion towards private advantage, a narrow self-end, or the preservation of mere life; this would be the matter in debate between us. The question would not be, "Who loved himself, or who not?" but, "Who loved and served himself the rightest, and after the truest manner?"

It is the height of wisdom, no doubt, to be rightly selfish. And to value life, as far as life is good, belongs as much to courage as to discretion. But a wretched life is no wise man's wish. To be without honesty, is in effect to be without natural affection or sociableness of any kind. And a life without natural affection, friendship, or sociableness, would be found a wretched one, were it to be tried. It is as these feelings and affections are intrinsically valuable and worthy, that self-interest is to be rated and esteemed. A man is by nothing so much himself, as by his temper, and the character of his passions and affections. If he loses what is manly and worthy in these, he is as much lost to himself, as when he loses his memory and understanding. The least step into villany or baseness, changes the character and value of a life. He who would preserve life at any rate, must abuse himself more than any one can abuse him,



And if life be not a dear thing indeed, he who has refused to live a villain, and has preferred death to a base action, has been a gainer by the bargain.

## S E C T. IV.

**I**T is well for you, my friend! that in your education you have had little to do with the philosophy<sup>1</sup> or philosophers of our days. A good poet and an honest historian, may afford learning enough for a gentleman. And such a one, whilst he reads these authors as his diversion, will have a truer relish of their sense, and understand them better, than a pedant with all his labors, and the assistance of his volumes of commentators. I am sensible, that of old it was the custom to send the youth of highest quality to philosophers to be formed. It was in their schools, in their company, and by their precepts and example, that the illustrious pupils were inured to hardship, and exercised in the severest courses of temperance, and self-denial. By such an early discipline, they were fitted for the command of others; to maintain their country's honor in war, rule wisely in the state, and fight against luxury and corrup-

<sup>1</sup> Our author, it seems, writes at present as to a young gentleman chiefly of a court-breeding. See, however, his further sentiments more particularly in treatise 3. (*viz. Soliloquy*), part 3. sect. 3. parag. 7. in the notes, in this volume.



tion in times of prosperity and peace. If any of these arts are comprehended in university-learning, it is well. But as some universities in the world are now modelled, they seem not so very effectual to these purposes, nor so fortunate in preparing for a right practice of the world, or a just knowledge of men and things. Had you been thorough-paced in the ethics or politics of the schools, I should never have thought of writing a word to you upon common sense, or the love of mankind. I should not have cited the poet's<sup>2</sup> "*dulce et decorum*." Nor, if I had made a character for you, as he for his noble friend, should I have crowned it with his

<sup>3</sup> *Non ille pro caris amicis,  
Aut patria timidus perire.*

Our philosophy now-a-days runs after the manner of that able sophister, who said, Skin for skin! all that a man hath he will give for his life<sup>4</sup>. It is orthodox divinity, as well as sound philosophy, with some men, to rate life by the number and exquisiteness of the pleasing sensations. These they constantly set in opposition to dry virtue and honesty. And upon this foot, they think it proper to call all men fools, who would hazard a life, or part with any of these pleasing sensations; except on the condition of being repaid in the same coin, and with good interest

<sup>2</sup> Sup. p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> Hor. lib. 4. od. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Job. ii. 4.



into the bargain. Thus it seems, we are to learn virtue by usury; and enhance the value of life, and of the pleasures of sense, in order to be wise, and to live well.

But you, my friend! are stubborn in this point: and instead of being brought to think mournfully of death, or to repine at the loss of what you may sometimes hazard by your honesty, you can laugh at such maxims as these; and divert yourself with the improved selfishness and philosophical cowardice of these fashionable moralists. You will not be taught to value life at their rate, or degrade Honesty as they do, who make it only a name. You are persuaded there is something more in the thing than fashion or applause; that Worth and Merit are substantial; and no way variable by fancy or will; and that Honor is as much itself, when acting by itself, and unseen; as when seen, and applauded by all the world.

Should one who had the countenance of a gentleman ask me, "Why I would avoid being nasty, when no body was present?" in the first place, I should be fully satisfied that he himself was a very nasty gentleman who could ask this question; and that it would be a hard matter for me to make him ever conceive what true cleanliness was. However, I might, notwithstanding this, be contented to give him a slight answer, and say, "It was because I had a nose." Should he trouble me further, and ask again, "What if I had a cold? or what if



“naturally I had no such nice smell?” I might answer perhaps, “That I cared as little to see myself nasty, as that others should see me in that condition.” But what if it were in the dark? Why, even then, though I had neither nose nor eyes, my sense of the matter would still be the same; my nature would rise at the thought of what was fordid; or if it did not, I should have a wretched nature indeed, and hate myself for a beast. Honor myself I never could, whilst I had no better a sense of what, in reality, I owed myself, and what became me, as a human creature.

Much in the same manner have I heard it asked, Why should a man be honest in the dark? What a man must be to ask this question, I won't say. But for those who have no better a reason for being honest than the fear of a gibbet or a jail; I should not, I confess, much covet their company or acquaintance. And if any guardian of mine who had kept his trust, and given me back my estate when I came of age, had been discovered to have acted thus, through fear only of what might happen to him; I should for my own part, undoubtedly, continue civil and respectful to him; but for my opinion of his worth, it would be such as the Pythian god had of his votary, who devoutly feared him, and therefore restored to a friend what had been deposited in his hands.



*Reddidit ergo metu, non moribus, et tamen omnem  
Vocem adyti dignam templo, veramque probavit  
Extinctus tota pariter cum prole domoque.*

I know very well, that many services to the public are done merely for the sake of a gratuity; and that informers in particular are to be taken care of, and sometimes made pensioners of state. But I must beg pardon for the particular thoughts I may have of these gentlemen's merit; and shall never bestow my esteem on any other than the voluntary discoverers of villany, and hearty prosecutors of their country's interest. And in this respect, I know nothing greater or nobler than the undertaking and managing some important accusation; by which some high criminal of state, or some formed body of conspirators against the public, may be arraigned, and brought to punishment, through the honest zeal and public affection of a private man.

I know too, that the mere vulgar of mankind often stand in need of such a rectifying object as the gallows before their eyes. Yet I have no belief, that any man of a liberal education, or common honesty, ever needed to have recourse to this idea in his mind, the better to restrain him from playing the knave. And if a Saint had no other virtue than what was raised in him by the same objects of reward and punishment, in a more distant state; I know not whose love



or esteem he might gain besides ; but for my own part, I should never think him worthy of mine.

*Nec furtum feci, nec fugi, si mihi dicat*

*Servus : Habes pretium, loris non ureris, aio.*

*Non hominem occidi : non pasces in cruce corvos.*

*Sum bonus et frugi : renuit, negat atque Sabellus.*

HOR. epist. 16. lib. 1.



## P A R T. IV.

## S E C T. I.

**B**Y this time, my friend ! you may possibly, I hope, be satisfied, that as I am in earnest in defending raillery, so I can be sober too in the use of it. It is in reality a serious study, to learn to temper and regulate that humor which nature has given us, as a more lenitive remedy against vice, and a kind of specific against superstition and melancholy delusion. There is a great difference between seeking how to raise a laugh from every thing, and seeking, in every thing, what justly may be laughed at. For nothing is ridiculous except what is deformed : nor is any thing proof against raillery, except what is handsome and just. And therefore it is the hardest thing in the world, to deny fair Honesty the use of this weapon, which can never bear an edge against herself, and bears against every thing contrary.

If the very Italian buffoons were to give us the rule in these cases, we should learn by them, that, in their lowest and most scurrilous way of wit, there was nothing so successfully to be played upon, as the passions of cowardice and avarice. One may defy the world to turn real bravery or generosity into ridicule. A glutton or mere sensualist is as ridiculous at the other



two characters. Nor can an unaffected temperance be made the subject of contempt to any besides the grossest and most contemptible of mankind. Now, these three ingredients make up a virtuous character; as the contrary three a vitious one. How therefore can we possibly make a jest of honesty? — To laugh both ways, is nonsensical. And if the ridicule lie against sottishness, avarice, and cowardice, you see the consequence. A man must be soundly ridiculous, who, with all the wit imaginable, would go about to ridicule wisdom, or laugh at honesty or good manners.

A man of thorough good-breeding<sup>1</sup>, whatever else he be, is incapable of doing a rude or brutal action. He never deliberates in this case, or considers of the matter by prudential rules of self-interest and advantage. He acts from his nature, in a manner necessarily, and without reflection: and if he did not, it were impossible for him to answer his character, or be found that truly well-bred man, on every occasion. It is the same with the honest man. He cannot deliberate in the case of a plain villany. A plum is no temptation to him. He likes and loves himself too well, to change hearts with one of those corrupt miscreants, who amongst them gave that name to a round sum of money gained by rapine and plunder of the commonwealth. He who would enjoy a freedom of mind, and be truly possessor of himself, must be above the thought of stooping to what is villanous

<sup>1</sup> Misc. 3. chap. 1. parag. ult. et penult. in vol. 3.



or base. He, on the other side, who has a heart to stoop, must necessarily quit the thought of manliness, resolution, friendship, merit, and a character with himself and others. But to affect these enjoyments and advantages, together with the privileges of a licentious principle; to pretend to enjoy society, and a free mind, in company with a knavish heart, is as ridiculous as the way of children, who eat their cake, and afterwards cry for it. When men begin to deliberate about dishonesty, and finding it goes less against their stomach, ask sily, "Why they should stick at a good piece of knavery, for a good sum?" they should be told, as children, that they cannot eat their cake, and have it.

When men, indeed, are become accomplished knaves, they are past crying for their cake. They know themselves, and are known by mankind. It is not these who are so much envied or admired. The moderate kind are the more taking with us. Yet, had we sense, we should consider, it is in reality the thorough profligate knave, the very complete unnatural villain alone, who can any way bid for happiness with the honest man. True interest is wholly on one side, or the other. All between is inconsistency<sup>2</sup>, irresolution, remorse,

<sup>2</sup> Our author's *French* translator cites, on this occasion, very aptly those verses of *Horace*, *sat. 7. lib. 2.*

——— *Quanto constantior idem*  
*In vitiis, tanto levius misere, ac prior illo*  
*Qui jam contento, jam laxo fune laborat.*

vexation,



vexation, and an ague-fit; from hot to cold; from one passion to another quite contrary; a perpetual discord of life; and an alternate disquiet and self-dislike. The only rest or repose must be through one, determined, considerate resolution: which when once taken, must be courageously kept, and the passions and affections brought under obedience to it; the temper steeled and hardened to the mind; the disposition to the judgment. Both must agree; else all must be disturbance and confusion. So that to think with one's self, in good earnest, "Why may not one do this little villany, or commit this one treachery, and but for once?" is the most ridiculous imagination in the world, and contrary to Common Sense. For a common honest man, whilst left to himself, and undisturbed by philosophy, and subtile reasonings about his interest, gives no other answer to the thought of villany, than that he cannot possibly find in his heart to set about it, or conquer the natural aversion he has to it. And this is natural and just.

The truth is, as notions stand now in the world, with respect to morals, honesty is like to gain little by philosophy, or deep speculations of any kind. In the main, it is best to stick to common sense, and go no further. Men's first thoughts, in this matter, are generally better than their second; their natural notions better than those refined by study, or consultation with casuists. According to common speech, as well as common sense, Honesty is the best policy: but, according to refined sense, the only well-advised



persons, as to this world, are errant knaves; and they alone are thought to serve themselves, who serve their passions, and indulge their loosest appetites and desires.—Such, it seems, are the wise, and such the wisdom of this world!

An ordinary man talking of a vile action, in a way of common sense, says naturally and heartily, “He would not be guilty of such a thing for the whole world.” But speculative men find great modifications in the case; many ways of evasion; many remedies; many alleviations. A good gift rightly applied; a right method of suing out a pardon; good almshouses, and charitable foundations erected for right worshippers; and a good zeal shown for the right belief, may sufficiently atone for one wrong practice; especially when it is such as raises a man to a considerable power (as they say) of doing good, and serving the true cause.

Many a good estate, many a high station has been gained upon such a bottom as this. Some crowns too may have been purchased on these terms: and some great emperors’ (if I mistake not) there have been of old, who were much assisted by these or the like principles; and in return were not ungrateful to the cause and party which had assisted them. The forgers of such morals have been amply endowed: and the world has paid roundly for its philosophy; since the original plain principles of humanity, and the

<sup>3</sup> Misc. 2. chap. 2. parag. 23, 24. 34, 35. in vol. 3.



simple honest precepts of peace and mutual love, have, by a sort of spiritual chymists, been so sublimated, as to become the highest corrosives; and passing through their limbecs, have yielded the strongest spirit of mutual hatred and malignant persecution.

## S E C T. II.

**BUT** our humors, my friend! incline us not to melancholy reflections. Let the solemn reprovers of vice proceed in the manner most suitable to their genius and character. I am ready to congratulate with them on the success of their labors, in that authoritative way which is allowed them. I know not, in the mean while, why others may not be allowed to ridicule folly, and recommend wisdom and virtue (if possibly they can) in a way of pleasantry and mirth. I know not why poets, or such as write chiefly for the entertainment of themselves and others, may not be allowed this privilege. And if it be the complaint of our standing reformers, that they are not heard so well by the gentlemen of fashion; if they exclaim against those airy wits who fly to ridicule as a protection, and make successful sallies from that quarter; why should it be denied one, who is only a volunteer in this cause, to engage the adversary on his own terms, and expose himself willingly to such attacks, on the single



condition of being allowed fair play in the same kind?

By gentlemen of fashion, I understand those to whom a natural good genius, or the force of good education, has given a sense of what is naturally graceful and becoming. Some by mere nature, others by art and practice, are masters of an ear in music, an eye in painting, a fancy in the ordinary things of ornament and grace, a judgment in proportions of all kinds, and a general good taste in most of those subjects which make the amusement and delight of the ingenious people of the world. Let such gentlemen as these be as extravagant as they please, or as irregular in their morals; they must at the same time discover their inconsistency, live at variance with themselves, and in contradiction to that principle on which they ground their highest pleasure and entertainment.

Of all other beauties which virtuosos pursue, poets celebrate, musicians sing, and architects or artists, of whatever kind, describe or form; the most delightful, the most engaging and pathetic, is that which is drawn from real life, and from the passions. Nothing affects the heart like that which is purely from itself, and of its own nature; such as, the beauty of sentiments, the grace of actions, the turn of characters, and the proportions and features of a human mind. This lesson of philosophy, even a romance, a poem, or a play may teach us; whilst the fabulous author leads us with such pleasure through the labyrinth



of the affections, and interests us, whether we will or no, in the passions of his heroes and heroines.

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*Angit,*  
*Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,*  
*Ut Magus*<sup>1</sup>.

Let poets, or the men of harmony, deny, if they can, this force of nature, or withstand this moral magic. They, for their parts, carry a double portion of this charm about them. For, in the first place, the very passion which inspires them, is itself the love of numbers, decency, and proportion; and this too not in a narrow sense, or after a selfish way, (for who of them composes for himself?), but in a friendly social view, for the pleasure and good of others, even down to posterity and future ages. And, in the next place, it is evident in these performers, that their chief theme and subject, that which raises their genius the most, and by which they so effectually move others, is purely manners, and the moral part. For this is the effect, and this the beauty of their art; “in vocal measures of syllables and sounds, “to express the harmony and numbers of an inward kind, and represent the beauties of a human soul, by proper foils and contrarieties, “which serve as graces in this limning, and render

<sup>1</sup> Hor. epist. 1. lib. 2.



“ this music of the passions more powerful and  
 “ enchanting.”

The admirers of beauty in the fair sex would laugh, perhaps, to hear of a moral part in their amours. Yet what a stir is made about a heart! what curious search of sentiments, and tender thoughts! what praises of a humor, a sense, a *je-ne-sçai-quoi* of wit, and all those graces of a mind, which these virtuoso-lovers delight to celebrate! Let them settle this matter among themselves; and regulate, as they think fit, the proportions which these different beauties hold one to another: they must allow still, there is a beauty of the mind, and such as is essential in the case. Why else is the very air of foolishness enough to cloy a lover at first sight? Why does an idiot look and manner destroy the effect of all those outward charms, and rob the fair-one of her power, though regularly armed in all the exactness of features and complexion? We may imagine what we please of a substantial, solid part of beauty: but were the subject to be well criticised, we should find, perhaps, that what we most admired, even in the turn of outward features, was only a mysterious expression, and a kind of shadow of something inward in the temper: and that when we were struck with a majestic air, a sprightly look, an Amazon, bold grace, or a contrary soft and gentle one; it was chiefly the fancy of these characters or qualities which wrought on us: our imagination being busied in forming beauteous shapes and images of



this rational kind, which entertained the mind, and held it in admiration; whilst other passions, of a lower species, were employed another way. The preliminary addresses, the declarations, the explanations, confidences, clearings; the dependence on something mutual, something felt by way of return; the "*spes animi credula mutui*;" all these become necessary ingredients in the affair of love, and are authentically established by the men of elegance and art in this way of passion.

Nor can the men of cooler passions, and more deliberate pursuits, withstand the force of beauty in other subjects. Every one is a virtuoso, of a higher or lower degree: every one pursues a Grace, and courts a Venus of one kind or another<sup>2</sup>. The *venustum*, the *honestum*, the *decorum* of things will force its way. They who refuse to give it scope in the nobler subjects of a rational and moral kind, will find its prevalency elsewhere, in an inferior order of things<sup>3</sup>. They who overlook the main springs of action, and despise the thought of numbers and proportion in a life at large, will, in the mean particulars of it, be no less taken up and engaged, as, either in the study of common arts, or in the care and culture of mere mechanic beauties. The models of houses, buildings, and their accompanying ornaments; the plans of gardens, and their compartment; the ordering of walks, plantations, avenues, and a thousand other

<sup>2</sup> Advice to an author, part 3. § 3. parag. 9. in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Misc. 3. chap. 2. parag. 13. in vol. 3.



fymmetries, will fucceed in the room of that happier and higher fymmetry and order of a mind. The fpecies of fair, noble, handsome, will difcover itfelf on a thoufand occafions, and in a thoufand fubjects\*. The fpectre ftill will haunt us in fome fhape or other; and when driven from our cool thoughts, and frighted from the clofet, will meet us even at court, and fill our heads with dreams of grandeur, titles, honors, and a falfe magnificence and beauty; to which we are ready to facrifice our higheft pleafure and eafe; and for the fake of which we become the merelt drudges, and moft abject flaves.

The men of pleafure, who feem the greateft contemners of this philofophical beauty, are forced often to confefs her charms. They can as heartily as others commend honefty; and are as much ftruck with the beauty of a generous part. They admire the thing itfelf, though not the means; and, if poffible, they would fo order it, as to make probity and luxury agree. But the rules of harmony will not permit it; the diffonances are too ftrong. However, the attempts of this kind are not unpleafant to obferve. For though fome of the voluptuous are found fordid pleaders for bafenefs and corruption of every fort; yet others, more generous, endeavour to keep meafures with honefty; and underftanding pleafure better, are for bringing it under fome rule. They condemn

\* Misc. 2. ch. 1. parag. 8.; Misc. 3. ch. 2. parag. 29, 30, 31. in vol. 3.



this manner ; they praise the other. “ So far was  
 “ right ; but further , wrong. Such a case was  
 “ allowable ; but such a one not to be admitted.”  
 They introduce a justice and an order in their  
 pleasures. They would bring Reason to be of  
 their party , account in some manner for their  
 lives , and form themselves to some kind of  
 consonancy and agreement : or should they find  
 this impracticable on certain terms , they would  
 chuse to sacrifice their other pleasures to those  
 which arise from a generous behaviour , a regu-  
 larity of conduct , and a consistency of life and  
 manners :

*Et veræ numerosque modosque ediscere vitæ* <sup>5</sup>.

Other occasions will put us upon this thought ;  
 but chiefly a strong view of merit , in a generous  
 character , opposed to some detestably vile one.  
 Hence it is , that , among poets , the satirists seldom  
 fail in doing justice to Virtue. Nor are any of  
 the nobler poets false to this cause. Even modern  
 wits , whose turn is all towards gallantry and  
 pleasure , when barefaced villany stands in their  
 way , and brings the contrary species in view ,  
 can sing in passionate strains the praises of plain  
 honesty.

When we are highly friends with the world ,  
 successful with the fair , and prosperous in the  
 possession of other beauties ; we may perchance ,

<sup>5</sup> Hor. epist. 2. lib. 2.



as is usual, despise this sober mistress. But when we see, in the issue, what riot and excess naturally produce in the world; when we find, that by luxury's means, and for the service of vile interests, knaves are advanced above us, and the vilest of men preferred before the honestest<sup>6</sup>; we then behold Virtue in a new light, and, by the assistance of such a foil, can discern the beauty of honesty, and the reality of those charms, which before we understood not to be either natural or powerful.

## S E C T. III.

AND thus, after all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty, and moral truth. For all beauty is Truth. True features make the beauty of a face; and true proportions the beauty of architecture; as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fable, truth still is the perfection. And whoever is scholar enough to read the ancient philosopher, or his modern copists<sup>1</sup>, upon the nature of a

<sup>6</sup> Misc. 5. ch. 3. parag. 21. in vol. 3.

<sup>1</sup> The *French* translator, no doubt, has justly hit our author's thought, by naming in his margin the excellent *Bossu du poeme epique*; who, in that admirable comment and explanation of *Aristotle*, has perhaps not only shown himself the greatest of the *French* critics, but presented the world with a view of ancient literature and just writing, beyond any other modern of whatever nation.



dramatic and epic poem, will easily understand this account of truth<sup>2</sup>.

A painter, if he has any genius, understands the truth and unity of design; and knows he is even then unnatural, when he follows nature too close, and strictly copies life. For his art allows him not to bring all nature into his piece, but a part only. However, his piece, if it be beautiful, and carries truth, must be a whole by itself, complete, independent, and withal as great and comprehensive as he can make it. So that particulars, on this occasion, must yield to the general design; and all things be subservient to that which is principal: in order to form a certain easiness of sight; a simple, clear, and united view<sup>3</sup>, which

<sup>2</sup> Misc. 3. ch. 2. parag. 28, 29. Misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 39. in vol. 3.

<sup>3</sup> The τὸ εὐσύννοπον; as the great master of arts calls it in his *poetics*, chap. 23.; but particularly chap. 7. where he shows, “ That the τὸ καλόν, the beautiful, or the sublime, in these  
“ above-mentioned arts, is from the expression of *greatness* with  
“ *order*; that is to say, exhibiting the *principal* or *main* of what  
“ is designed, in the very largest proportions in which it is  
“ capable of being viewed. For when it is gigantic, it is in a  
“ manner out of sight, and can be no way comprehended in that  
“ simple and *united view*: as, on the contrary, when a piece is  
“ of the miniature kind; when it runs into the *detail*, and nice  
“ delineation of every little particular; it is, as it were, invisible,  
“ for the same reason; because the *summary beauty*, the *Whole*  
“ *itself*, cannot be comprehended in that *One united view*; which  
“ is broken and lost by the necessary attraction of the eye to every  
“ small and subordinate part. In a poetic system, the same regard  
“ must be had to the memory, as in painting to the eye. The  
“ dramatic kind is confined within the convenient and proper  
“ time of a spectacle. The epic is left more at large. Each



would be broken and disturbed by the expression of any thing peculiar or distinct.

Now, the variety of nature is such, as to distinguish every thing she forms, by a peculiar original character; which, if strictly observed, will make the subject appear unlike to any thing extant in the world besides. But this effect the good poet and painter seek industriously to pre-

“ work, however, must aim at *vastness*, and be as *great*, and  
 “ of as long duration as possible; but so as to be comprehended  
 “ (as to the main of it) by one easy *glance* or retrospect of  
 “ memory. And this the philosopher calls accordingly the τὸ  
 “ εὐμνημόνευτον.” I cannot better translate the passage, than as  
 I have done in these explanatory lines. For, besides what relates to mere art, the philosophical sense of the original is so majestic, and the whole treatise so masterly, that when I find even the *Latin* interpreters come so short, I should be vain to attempt any thing in our own language. I would only add a small remark of my own, which may perhaps be noticed by the studiers of statuary and painting, That the greatest of the ancient as well as modern artists, were ever inclined to follow this rule of the philosopher; and when they erred in their *designs* or *draughts*, it was on the side of *greatness*, by running into the unfizable and gigantic, rather than into the *minute* and delicate. Of this *Michael Angelo*, the great beginner and founder among the moderns, and *Zeuxis*, the same among the ancients, may serve as instances. See *Pliny*, lib. 35. cap. 9. concerning *Zeuxis*, and the notes of *Father Harduin*, in his edition *in usum Delphini*, p. 200. on the words *Deprehenditur tamen Zeuxis*, &c. And again-*Pliny* himself, upon *Euphanor*, in the same book, cap. 11. p. 226. *Docilis, ac laboriosus, ante omnes, et in quocumque genere excellens, ac sibi æqualis. Hic primus videtur expressisse dignitates heroum, et usurpasse symmetriam. Sed fuit universitate corporum exilior, capitibus articulisque grandior. Volumina quoque composuit de symmetria et coloribus*, &c.

Vide Advice to an author, part 3. § 3. parag. 11, 12. in this volume.



vent. They hate minuteness, and are afraid of singularity; which would make their images or characters appear capricious and fantastical. The mere face-painter, indeed, has little in common with the poet; but, like the mere historian, copies what he sees, and minutely traces every feature and odd mark. It is otherwise with the men of invention and design. It is from the many objects of nature, and not from a particular one, that those geniuses form the idea of their work. Thus the best artists are said to have been indefatigable in studying the best statues, as esteeming them a better rule than the perfectest human bodies could afford. And thus some considerable wits have recommended the best poems, as preferable to the best histories; and better teaching the truth of characters, and nature of mankind \*.

Nor can this criticism be thought high-strained. Though few confine themselves to these rules, few are insensible of them. Whatever quarter we may give to our vicious poets, or other composers of irregular and short-lived works, we know very well that the standing pieces of good artists must be formed after a more uniform way. Every just work of theirs comes under those natural rules of proportion and truth. The creature of their brain must be like one of nature's formation. It must have a body and parts proportionable; or

\* Thus the great master himself in his *poetics* above-cited;  
 Διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν· ἢ μὲν  
 γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἢ δ' ἱστορία τὰ κατ' ἕκαστον λέ-  
 γει.



the very vulgar will not fail to criticise the work, when it has neither head nor tail <sup>5</sup>. For so common sense ( according to just philosophy ) judges of those works which want the justness of a whole , and show their author , however curious and exact in particulars , to be in the main a very bungler :

*Infelix operis Summa, quia ponere Totum Nescit.*

Such is poetical , and such ( if I may so call it ) graphical or plastic truth. Narrative , or historical truth , must needs be highly estimable ; especially when we consider how mankind , who are become so deeply interested in the subject , have suffered by the want of clearness in it. It is itself a part of moral truth. To be a judge in one , requires a judgment in the other. The morals , the character , and genius of an author , must be thoroughly considered : and the historian or relater of things important to mankind , must , whoever he be , approve himself many ways to us , both in respect of his judgment , candor , and disinterestedness , ere we are bound to take any thing on his authority. And as for critical truth <sup>7</sup> , or the judgment and determination of what commentators , translators , paraphrasts , grammarians , and others , have , on this occasion , delivered to us ; in the midst of such variety of style , such different readings , such

<sup>5</sup> Misc. 1. ch. 3. parag. 6. and Misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 39. in vol. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Hor. epist. 3. lib. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Misc. 5. ch. 3. parag. 31. 35 , et 36. in vol. 3.



interpolations, and corruptions in the originals, such mistakes of copists, transcribers, editors, and a hundred such accidents, to which ancient books are subject: it becomes, upon the whole, a matter of nice speculation; considering, withal, that the reader, though an able linguist, must be supported by so many other helps from chronology, natural philosophy, geography, and other sciences.

And thus many previous truths are to be examined, and understood, in order to judge rightly of historical truth, and of the past actions and circumstances of mankind, as delivered to us by ancient authors of different nations, ages, times, and different in their characters and interests. Some moral and philosophical truths there are, withal, so evident in themselves, that it would be easier to imagine half mankind to have run mad, and joined precisely in one and the same species of folly, than to admit any thing as truth, which should be advanced against such natural knowledge, fundamental reason, and common sense.

This I have mentioned the rather, because some modern zealots appear to have no better knowledge of Truth, nor better manner of judging it, than by counting noses. By this rule, if they can poll an indifferent number out of a mob; if they can produce a set of Lancashire noddles, remote provincial head-pieces, or visionary assemblers, to attest a story of a witch upon a broomstick, and a flight in the air; they



triumph in the solid proof of their new prodigy, and cry, *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit!*

Religion, no doubt, is much indebted to these men of prodigy; who, in such a discerning age, would set her on the foot of popular tradition, and venture her on the same bottom with parish-tales, and gossiping stories of imps, goblins, and demoniacal pranks, invented to fright children, or make practice for common exorcists, and cunning-men! For by that name, you know, country-people are used to call those dealers in mystery, who are thought to conjure in an honest way, and foil the devil at his own weapon.

And now, my friend! I can perceive it is time to put an end to these reflections; lest, by endeavouring to expound things any further, I should be drawn from my way of humor, to harangue profoundly on these subjects. But should you find I had moralized in any tolerable manner, according to common sense, and without canting; I could be satisfied with my performance, such as it is, without fearing what disturbance I might possibly give to some formal censors of the age, whose discourses and writings are of another strain. I have taken the liberty, you see, to laugh upon some occasions; and if I have either laughed wrong, or been impertinently serious, I can be content to be laughed at in my turn. If contrariwise I am railed at, I can laugh still, as before, and with fresh advantage to my cause. For though, in reality, there could be nothing less a laughing matter, than the  
provoked



provoked rage, ill-will, and fury of certain zealous gentlemen, were they armed as lately they have been known; yet as the magistrate has since taken care to pare their talons, there is nothing very terrible in their encounter. On the contrary, there is something comical in the case. It brings to one's mind the fancy of those grotesque figures, and dragon-faces, which are seen often in the frontispice and on the corner-stones of old buildings. They seem placed there, as the defenders and supporters of the edifice; but, with all their grimace, are as harmless to people without, as they are useless to the building within. Great efforts of anger to little purpose, serve for pleasantry and farce. Exceeding fierceness, with perfect inability and impotence, makes the highest ridicule.

*I am, dear friend,*

*Affectionately Yours, &c.*







T R E A T I S E III.

V I Z.

S O L I L O Q U Y :

O R

A D V I C E

T O A N

A U T H O R.

— *Nec TE quæſiveris extra.*

PERS. fat. 1.



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VIX

SOLILOQUY

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# ADVICE TO AN AUTHOR.

## PART I.

### SECT. I.

**I** Have often thought how ill-natured a maxim it was, which, on many occasions, I have heard from people of good understanding, “That, as to what related to private conduct, no one was ever the better for Advice.” But, upon further examination, I have resolved with myself, that the maxim might be admitted without any violent prejudice to mankind. For in the manner advice was generally given, there was no reason, I thought, to wonder it should be so ill received. Something there was which strangely inverted the case, and made the giver to be the only gainer. For, by what I could observe in many occurrences of our lives, that which we called giving advice, was properly taking an occasion to show our own wisdom, at another’s expense. On the other side, to be instructed, or to receive advice, on the terms usually prescribed to us, was little better than tamely to afford another the occasion of raising himself a character from our defects.



In reality, however able or willing a man may be to advise, it is no easy matter to make Advice a free gift. For to make a gift free indeed, there must be nothing in it which takes from another, to add to ourself. In all other respects, to give, and to dispense, is generosity, and good-will: but to bestow wisdom, is to gain a mastery which cannot so easily be allowed us. Men willingly learn whatever else is taught them. They can bear a master in mathematics, in music, or in any other science; but not in understanding and good sense.

It is the hardest thing imaginable for an author not to appear assuming in this respect. For all authors at large are, in a manner, professed masters of understanding to the age. And for this reason, in early days, poets were looked upon as authentic sages, for dictating rules of life, and teaching manners and good sense. How they may have lost their pretension, I cannot say. It is their peculiar happiness and advantage, not to be obliged to lay their claim openly. And if, whilst they profess only to please, they secretly advise, and give instruction; they may now perhaps, as well as formerly, be esteemed, with justice, the best and most honorable among authors.

Mean while, “if dictating and prescribing be  
“of so dangerous a nature in other authors;  
“what must his case be, who dictates to authors  
“themselves?”

To this I answer, That my pretension is not



so much to give advice, as to consider of the way and manner of advising. My science, if it be any, is no better than that of a language-master, or a logician. For I have taken it strongly into my head, that there is a certain knack or legerdmain in argument, by which we may safely proceed to the dangerous part of advising, and make sure of the good fortune to have our advice accepted, if it be any thing worth.

My proposal is, to consider of this affair as a case of Surgery. It is practice, we all allow, which makes a hand. "But who, on this occasion, will be practised on? who will willingly be the first to try our hand, and afford us the requisite experience?" Here lies the difficulty. For supposing we had hospitals for this sort of surgery, and there were always in readiness certain meek patients, who would bear any incisions, and be probed or tented at our pleasure; the advantage no doubt would be considerable in this way of practice. Some insight must needs be obtained. In time a hand too might be acquired; but in all likelihood a very rough one; which would by no means serve the purpose of this latter surgery. For here a tenderness of hand is principally requisite. No surgeon will be called, who has not feeling and compassion. And where to find a subject in which the operator is likely to preserve the highest tenderness, and yet act with the greatest resolution and boldness, is certainly a matter of no slight consideration.



I am sensible there is in all considerable projects, at first appearance, a certain air of chimerical fancy and conceit, which is apt to render the projectors somewhat liable to ridicule. I would therefore prepare my reader against this prejudice, by assuring him, that, in the operation proposed, there is nothing which can justly excite his laughter; or if there be, the laugh perhaps may turn against him, by his own consent, and with his own concurrence: which is a specimen of that very art or science we are about to illustrate.

Accordingly, if it be objected against the above-mentioned practice, and art of surgery, "That we can no where find such a meek patient, with whom we can in reality make bold and for whom nevertheless we are sure to preserve the greatest tenderness and regard;" I assert the contrary, and say, for instance, That we have each of us ourselves to practice on. "Mere quibble! (you will say). For who can thus multiply himself into two persons, and be his own subject? Who can properly laugh at himself, or find in his heart to be either merry or severe on such an occasion?" Go to the poets, and they will present you with many instances. Nothing is more common with them, than this sort of soliloquy. A person of profound parts, or perhaps of ordinary capacity, happens, on some occasion, to commit a fault. He is concerned for it. He comes alone upon the stage; looks about him, to see if any body be near;



then takes himself to task, without sparing himself in the least. You would wonder to hear how close he pushes matters, and how thoroughly he carries on the business of self-dissection. By virtue of this soliloquy, he becomes two distinct persons. He is pupil and preceptor. He teaches, and he learns. And in good earnest, had I nothing else to plead in behalf of the morals of our modern dramatic poets, I should defend them still against their accusers for the sake of this very practice, which they have taken care to keep up in its full force. For whether the practice be natural or no, in respect of common custom and usage; I take upon me to assert, that it is an honest and laudable practice; and that if already it be not natural to us, we ought, however, to make it so, by study and application.

“Are we to go therefore to the stage for edification? Must we learn our catechism from the poets? and, like the players, speak aloud, what we debate at any time with ourselves alone?” Not absolutely so, perhaps; though where the harm would be of spending some discourse, and bestowing a little breath and clear voice purely upon ourselves, I cannot see. We might peradventure be less noisy and more profitable in company, if at convenient times we discharged some of our articulate sound, and spoke to ourselves viva voce when alone. For company is an extreme provocative to fancy; and, like a hot-bed in gardening, is apt to make our imaginations sprout too fast. But, by this



anticipating remedy of soliloquy, we may effectually provide against the inconvenience.

We have an account in history of a certain nation, who seem to have been extremely apprehensive of the effects of this frothiness or ventosity in speech, and were accordingly resolved to provide thoroughly against the evil. They carried this remedy of ours so far, that it was not only their custom, but their religion and law, to speak, laugh, use action, gesticulate, and do all in the same manner when by themselves, as when they were in company. If you had stolen upon them unawares at any time, when they had been alone, you might have found them in high dispute, arguing with themselves, reproofing, counselling, haranguing themselves, and in the most florid manner accosting their own persons. In all likelihood they had been once a people remarkably fluent in expression, much pestered with orators and preachers, and mightily subject to that disease which has been since called the leprosy of eloquence; till some sage legislator arose amongst them, who, when he could not oppose the torrent of words, and stop the flux of speech, by any immediate application, found means to give a vent to the loquacious humor, and broke the force of the distemper by eluding it.

Our present manners, I must own, are not so well calculated for this method of soliloquy, as to suffer it to become a national practice. It is but a small portion of this regimen, which I



would willingly borrow, and apply to private use; especially in the case of authors. I am sensible how fatal it might prove to many honorable persons, should they acquire such a habit as this, or offer to practice such an art within the reach of any mortal ear. For it is well known, we are not many of us like that Roman, who wished for windows to his breast, that all might be as conspicuous there as in his house, which for that very reason he had built as open as was possible. I would therefore advise our probationer, upon his first exercise, to retire into some thick wood, or rather take the point of some high hill; where, besides the advantage of looking about him for security, he would find the air perhaps more rarefied, and suitable to the perspiration required, especially in the case of a poetical genius.

*Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus, et fugit urbes*<sup>1</sup>.

It is remarkable in all great wits, that they have owned this practice of ours, and generally described themselves as a people liable to sufficient ridicule, for their great loquacity by themselves, and their profound taciturnity in company. Not only the poet and philosopher, but the orator himself, was wont to have recourse to our method. And the prince of this latter tribe may be proved to have been a great frequenter

<sup>1</sup> Hor. epist. 2. lib. 2.



of the woods and river-banks ; where he consumed abundance of his breath, suffered his fancy to evaporate, and reduced the vehemence both of his spirit and voice. If other authors find nothing which invites them to these recesses, it is because their genius is not of force enough: or though it be, their character, they may imagine, will hardly bear them out. For to be surprised in the odd actions, gestures, or tones, which are proper to such ascetics, I must own would be an ill adventure for a man of the world. But with poets and philosophers it is a known case,

*Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit* <sup>2</sup> —

Composing and raving must necessarily, we see, bear a resemblance. And for those composers who deal in systems, and airy speculations, they have vulgarly passed for a sort a prose-poets. Their secret practice and habit has been as frequently noted:

*Murmura cum secum et rabiosa silentia rodunt* <sup>3</sup>.

Both these sorts are happily indulged in this method of evacuation. They are thought to act naturally, and in their proper way, when they assume these odd manners. But of other authors it is expected they should be better bred. They

<sup>2</sup> Hor. sat. 7. lib. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Pers. sat. 3.



are obliged to preserve a more conversible habit; which is no small misfortune to them. For if their meditation and revery be obstructed by the fear of a nonconforming mien in conversation, they may happen to be so much the worse authors for being finer gentlemen. Their fervency of imagination may possibly be as strong as either the philosopher's or the poet's. But being denied an equal benefit of discharge, and withheld from the wholesome manner of relief in private, it is no wonder if they appear with so much froth and scum in public.

It is observable, that the writers of Memoirs and Essays are chiefly subject, to this frothy distemper. Nor can it be doubted that this is the true reason why these gentlemen entertain the world so lavishly with what relates to themselves. For having had no opportunity of privately conversing with themselves, or exercising their own genius, so as to make acquaintance with it, or prove its strength; they immediately fall to work in a wrong place, and exhibit on the stage of the world that practice which they should have kept to themselves; if they designed that either they, or the world, should be the better for their moralities. Who indeed can endure to hear an empiric talk of his own constitution, how he governs and manages it, what diet agrees best with it, and what his practice is with himself? The proverb, no doubt, is very just, "Physician, cure thyself." Yet methinks one should have but an ill time, to be present at these bodily opera-



tions. Nor is the reader in truth any better entertained, when he is obliged to assist at the experimental discussions of his practising author, who all the while is in reality doing no better, than taking his physic in public.

For this reason, I hold it very indecent for any one to publish his meditations, occasional reflections, solitary thoughts, or other such exercises as come under the notion of this self-discouraging practice. And the modestest title I can conceive for such works, would be that of a certain author, who called them his crudities. It is the unhappiness of those wits who conceive suddenly, but without being able to go out their full time, that, after many miscarriages and abortions, they can bring nothing well-shapen or perfect into the world. They are not, however, the less fond of their offspring, which in a manner they beget in public. For so public-spirited they are, that they can never afford themselves the least time to think in private, for their own particular benefit and use. For this reason, though they are often retired, they are never by themselves. The world is ever of the party. They have their author-character in view, and are always considering how this or that thought would serve to complete some set of contemplations, or furnish out the common-place book, from whence these treasured riches are to flow in plenty on the necessitous world.

But if our candidates for authorship happen to be of the sanctified kind, it is not to be imagined



how much farther still their charity is apt to extend. So exceeding great is their indulgence and tendernefs for mankind, that they are unwilling the leaft fample of their devout exercife fhould be loft. Though there are already fo many formularies and rituals appointed for this fpecies of foliloquy; they can allow nothing to lie concealed, which paffes in this religious commerce and way of dialogue between them and their foul.

These may be termed a fort of pseudo-ascetics, who can have no real converse either with themfelves, or with heaven; whilst they look thus afquint upon the world, and carry titles and editions along with them in their meditations. And although the books of this fort, by a common idiom, are called good books; the authors, for certain, are a forry race: for religious crudities are undoubtedly the worft of any. A faint-author\* of all men leaft values politeneffs. He fcorns to confine that fpirit in which he writes, to rules of criticifm and profane learning. Nor is he inclined in any refpect to play the critic on himfelf, or regulate his ftyle or language by the ftandard of good company, and people of the better fort. He is above the confideration of that which in a narrow fenfe we call manners. Nor is he apt to examine any other faults than thofe which he calls fins; though a finner againft good-breeding, and the

\* Mife. 5. chap. 1. parag. 16. note 3. in vol. 3.



laws of decency, will no more be esteemed a good author, than will a sinner against grammar, good argument, or good sense. And if moderation and temper are not of the party with a writer, let his cause be ever so good, I doubt whether he will be able to recommend it with great advantage to the world.

On this account, I would principally recommend our exercise of self-converse to all such persons as are addicted to write after the manner of holy advisers; especially if they lie under an indispensable necessity of being talkers or haranguers in the same kind. For to discharge frequently and vehemently in public, is a great hindrance to the way of private exercise; which consists chiefly in control. But where, instead of control, debate, or argument, the chief exercise of the wit consists in uncontrollable harangues and reasonings, which must neither be questioned nor contradicted; there is great danger, lest the party, through this habit, should suffer much by crudities, indigestions, choler, bile, and particularly by a certain tumor or flatulency, which renders him of all men the least able to apply the wholesome regimen of self-practice. It is no wonder if such quaint practitioners grow to an enormous size of absurdity, whilst they continue in the reverse of that practice by which alone we correct the redundancy of humors, and chasten the exuberance of conceit and fancy.

A remarkable instance of the want of this  
sovereign



sovereign remedy may be drawn from our common great talkers, who engross the greatest part of the conversations of the world, and are the forwardest to speak in public assemblies. Many of these have a sprightly genius, attended with a mighty heat and ebullition of fancy. But it is a certain observation in our science, that they who are great talkers in company, have never been any talkers by themselves, nor used to these private discussions of our home-regimen. For which reason their froth abounds. Nor can they discharge any thing without some mixture of it. But when they carry their attempts beyond ordinary discourse, and would rise to the capacity of authors, the case grows worse with them. Their page can carry none of the advantages of their person. They can no way bring into paper those airs they give themselves in discourse. The turns of voice and action, with which they help out many a lame thought and incoherent sentence, must here be laid aside; and the speech taken to pieces, compared together, and examined from head to foot. So that unless the party has been used to play the critic thoroughly upon himself, he will hardly be found proof against the criticisms of others. His thoughts can never appear very correct, unless they have been used to sound correction by themselves, and been well formed and disciplined before they are brought into the field. It is the hardest thing in the world to be a good thinker, without being a strong



self-examiner, and thorough-paced dialogist, in this solitary way.

## S E C T. II.

**B**UT to bring our case a little closer still to morals: I might perhaps very justifiably take occasion here to enter into a spacious field of learning, to show the antiquity of that opinion, "That we have  
 " each of us a demon, genius, angel, or guardian-  
 " spirit, to whom we were strictly joined, and  
 " committed, from our earliest dawn of reason,  
 " or moment of our birth." This opinion, were it literally true, might be highly serviceable, no doubt, towards the establishment of our system and doctrine. For it would infallibly be proved a kind of sacrilege or impiety to slight the company of so divine a guest, and in a manner banish him our breast, by refusing to enter with him into those secret conferences, by which alone he could be enabled to become our adviser and guide. But I should esteem it unfair to proceed upon such a hypothesis as this; when the very utmost the wise ancients ever meant by this demon companion, I conceive to have been no more than enigmatically to declare, "That we  
 " had each of us a patient in ourself; that we  
 " were properly our own subjects of practice;  
 " and that we then became due practitioners,  
 " when, by virtue of an intimate recess, we could



“ discover a certain duplicity of soul, and divide ourselves into two parties.” One of these, as they supposed, would immediately approve himself a venerable sage; and, with an air of authority, erect himself our counsellor and governor; whilst the other party, who had nothing in him besides what was base and servile, would be contented to follow and obey.

According therefore as this recess was deep and intimate, and the dual number practically formed in us, we were supposed to advance in morals and true wisdom. This, they thought, was the only way of composing matters in our breast, and establishing that subordination, which alone could make us agree with ourselves, and be of a piece within. They esteemed this a more religious work than any prayers, or other duty in the temple. And this they advised us, to carry thither, as the best offering which could be made.

*Compositum jus, fasque animi, sanctosque recessus  
Mentis*<sup>1</sup>. — — — —

This was, among the ancients, that celebrated Delphic inscription, “Recognize yourself;” which was as much as to say, divide yourself, or, be two. For, if the division were rightly made, all within would of course, they thought, be rightly understood, and prudently managed. Such con-

<sup>1</sup> Pers. sat. 2.



fidence they had in this home-dialect of Soliloquy. For it was accounted the peculiar of philosophers and wise-men, to be able to hold themselves in talk. And it was their boast on this account, "That they were never less alone than when by themselves." A knave, they thought, could never be by himself. Not that his conscience was always sure of giving him disturbance; but he had not, they supposed, so much interest with himself, as to exert this generous faculty, and raise himself a companion; who being fairly admitted into partnership, would quickly mend his partner, and set his affairs on a right foot.

One would think, there was nothing easier for us, than to know our own minds, and understand what our main scope was; what we plainly drove at, and what we proposed to ourselves, as our end, in every occurrence of our lives. But our thoughts have generally such an obscure implicit language, that it is the hardest thing in the world to make them speak out distinctly. For this reason, the right method is, to give them voice and accent. And this, in our default, is what the moralists or philosophers endeavour to do to our hand; when, as is usual, they hold us out a kind of vocal looking-glass, draw sound out of our breast, and instruct us to personate ourselves, in the plainest manner.

*Illa sibi introrsum, et sub lingua immurmurat: ô si  
Ebullit patrum præclarum funus<sup>2</sup>!*

<sup>2</sup> Pers. sat. 2.



A certain air of pleasantry and humor, which prevails now-a-days in the fashionable world, gives a son the assurance to tell a father, he has lived too long; and a husband the privilege of talking of his second wife before his first. But let the airy gentleman, who makes thus bold with others, retire a while out of company, and he scarce dares tell himself his wishes. Much less can he endure to carry on his thought, as he necessarily must, if he enters once thoroughly into himself, and proceeds by interrogatories to form the home-acquaintance and familiarity required. For thus, after some struggle, we may suppose him to accost himself. "Tell me now, my honest heart! am I really honest, and of some worth? or do I only make a fair show, and am intrinsically no better than a rascal? As good a friend, a countryman, or a relation, as I appear outwardly to the world, or as I would willingly perhaps think myself to be; should I not in reality be glad they were hanged, any of them, or broke their necks, who happened to stand between me and the least portion of an estate? Why not, since it is my interest? Should I not be glad, therefore, to help this matter forwards, and promote my interest, if it lay fairly in my power? No doubt; provided I were sure not to be punished for it. And what reason has the greatest rogue in nature for not doing thus? The same reason, and no other. Am I not then, at the bottom,



“ the same as he?            The same: an arrant  
 “ villain; though perhaps more a coward, and  
 “ not so perfect in my kind.            If interest,  
 “ therefore, points me out this road, whither  
 “ would humanity and compassion lead me?  
 “            Quite contrary.            Why therefore do I  
 “ cherish such weaknesses?            Why do I sympa-  
 “ thize with others? why please myself in the  
 “ conceit of worth and honor? a character, a  
 “ memory, an issue, or a name?            What else  
 “ are these but scruples in my way? Wherefore  
 “ do I thus bely my own interest, and, by keep-  
 “ ing myself half-knave, approve myself a tho-  
 “ rough fool?”

This is a language we can by no means endure to hold with ourselves, whatever raillery we may use with others. We may defend villany, or cry up folly, before the world: but to appear fools, madmen, or varlets, to ourselves, and prove it to our own faces, that we are really such, is insupportable. For so true a reverence has every one for himself, when he comes clearly to appear before his close companion, that he had rather profess the vilest things of himself in open company, than hear his character privately from his own mouth. So that we may readily from hence conclude, That the chief interest of ambition, avarice, corruption, and every sly insinuating vice, is, to prevent this interview and familiarity of discourse, which is consequent upon close retirement and inward recess. It is the grand artifice of villany and lewdness, as well as of



superstition and bigotry, to put us upon terms of greater distance and formality with ourselves, and evade our proving method of Soliloquy. And for this reason, how specious soever may be the instruction and doctrine of formalists, their very manner itself is a sufficient blind or remora in the way of honesty and good sense.

I am sensible, that should my reader be peradventure a lover, after the more profound and solemn way of love, he would be apt to conclude, that he was no stranger to our proposed method of practice; being conscious to himself of having often made vigorous excursions into those solitary regions above-mentioned, where Soliloquy is upheld with most advantage. He may chance to remember how he has many times addressed the woods and rocks in audible articulate sounds, and seemingly expostulated with himself in such a manner as if he had really formed the requisite distinction, and had the power to entertain himself in due form. But it is very apparent, that though all were true we have here supposed, it can no way reach the case before us. For a passionate lover, whatever solitude he may affect, can never be truly by himself. His case is like the author's who has begun his courtship to the public, and is embarked in an intrigue which sufficiently amuses, and takes him out of himself. Whatever he meditates alone, is interrupted still by the imagined presence of the mistress he pursues. Not a thought, not an expression, not a sigh, which is purely for



himself. All is appropriated, and all devoutly tendered to the object of his passion. In so much that there is nothing ever so trivial or accidental of this kind, which he is not desirous should be witnessed by the party whose grace and favor he solicits.

It is the same reason which keeps the imaginary saint or mystic, from being capable of this entertainment. Instead of looking narrowly into his own nature and mind, that he may be no longer a mystery to himself, he is taken up with the contemplation of other mysterious natures, which he can never explain or comprehend. He has the spectres of his zeal before his eyes; and is as familiar with his modes, essences, personages, and exhibitions of Deity, as the conjurer with his different forms, species, and orders of Genii or Demons. So that we make no doubt to assert, that not so much as a recluse religionist, a votary, or hermit, was ever truly by himself. And thus, since neither lover, author, mystic, or conjurer, (who are the only claimants), can truly or justly be entitled to a share in this self-entertainment; it remains, that the only person entitled, is the man of sense, the sage, or philosopher. However, since of all other characters we are generally the most inclined to favor that of a lover, it may not, we hope, be impertinent, on this occasion, to recite the story of an amour.

A virtuous young prince, of a heroic soul, capable of love and friendship, made war upon a tyrant, who was in every respect his reverse. It was



the happiness of our prince to be as great a conqueror by his clemency and bounty, as by his arms and military virtue. Already he had won over to his party several potentates and princes, who before had been subject to the tyrant. Among those who adhered still to the enemy, there was a prince, who having all the advantage of person and merit, had lately been made happy in the possession and mutual love of the most beautiful princess in the world. It happened that the occasions of the war called the new-married prince to a distance from his beloved princess. He left her secure, as he thought, in a strong castle, far within the country: but, in his absence, the place was taken by surprise, and the princess brought a captive to the quarters of our heroic prince.

There was in the camp a young nobleman, favorite of the prince; one who had been educated with him, and was still treated by him with perfect familiarity. Him he immediately sent for; and, with strict injunctions, committed the captive princess to his charge; resolving she should be treated with that respect which was due to her high rank and merit. It was the same young lord who had discovered her disguised among the prisoners, and learned her story; the particulars of which he now related to the prince. He spoke in ecstasy on this occasion; telling the prince how beautiful she appeared, even in the midst of sorrow; and though disguised under the meanest habit, yet how distinguishable, by her air and



manner, from every other beauty of her sex. But what appeared strange to our young nobleman, was, that the prince, during this whole relation, discovered not the least intention of seeing the lady, or satisfying that curiosity, which seemed so natural on such an occasion. He pressed him, but without success. "Not see her, Sir!" said he, wondering, "when she is so handsome, beyond what you have ever seen?"

"For that very reason," replied the prince; "I would the rather decline the interview. For should I, upon the bare report of her beauty, be so charmed as to make the first visit at this urgent time of business, I may, upon sight, with better reason, be induced perhaps to visit her when I am more at leisure, and so again and again, till at last I may have no leisure left for my affairs."

"Would you, Sir! persuade me then," said the young nobleman, smiling "that a fair face can have such power as to force the will itself, and constrain a man in any respect to act contrary to what he thinks becoming him? Are we to hearken to the poets, in what they tell us of that incendiary Love, and his irresistible flames? A real flame, we see, burns all alike: but that imaginary one of beauty hurts only those who are consenting. It affects no otherwise, than as we ourselves are pleased to allow it. In many cases we absolutely command it; as where relation and consanguinity are in the nearest degree. Authority and law, we see, can master. But



“ it would be vain as well as unjust , for any  
 “ law to intermeddle or prescribe , were not  
 “ the case voluntary , and our will entirely  
 “ free. ”

“ How comes it then , ” replied the prince , “ that  
 “ if we are thus masters of our choice , and free  
 “ at first to admire and love where we approve ,  
 “ we cannot afterwards as well cease to love ,  
 “ whenever we see cause ? This latter liberty you  
 “ will hardly defend. For I doubt not , you have  
 “ heard of many , who , though they were used  
 “ to set the highest value upon liberty before  
 “ they loved , yet afterwards were necessitated to  
 “ serve in the most abject manner ; finding them-  
 “ selves constrained and bound by a stronger chain  
 “ than any of iron or adamant. ”

“ Such wretches , ” replied the youth , “ I have  
 “ often heard complain ; who , if you will believe  
 “ them , are wretched indeed , without means or  
 “ power to help themselves. You may hear them  
 “ in the same manner complain grievously of life  
 “ itself, But though there are doors enow to go  
 “ out of life ; they find it convenient to keep still  
 “ where they are. They are the very same  
 “ pretenders , who , through this plea of irresistible  
 “ necessity , make bold with what is another’s ,  
 “ and attempt unlawful beds. But the law , I  
 “ perceive , makes bold with them in its turn , as  
 “ with other invaders of property. Neither is it  
 “ your custom , Sir , to pardon such offences. So  
 “ that beauty itself , you must allow , is innocent  
 “ and harmless , and can compel no one to do any



“ thing amiss. The debauched compel themselves,  
 “ and unjustly charge their guilt on Love. They  
 “ who are honest and just, can admire and love  
 “ whatever is beautiful, without offering at any  
 “ thing beyond what is allowed. How then is it  
 “ possible, Sir, that one of your virtue should be  
 “ in pain on any such account, or fear such a  
 “ temptation? You see, Sir, I am sound and  
 “ whole, after having beheld the princess. I have  
 “ conversed with her; I have admired her in the  
 “ highest degree; yet am myself still, and in my  
 “ duty; and shall be ever in the same manner at  
 “ your command.”

“ It is well,” replied the prince, “ keep your-  
 “ self so. Be ever the same man, and look to  
 “ your charge carefully, as becomes you. For it  
 “ may so happen, in the present posture of the  
 “ war, that this fair captive may stand us in  
 “ good stead.”

With this the young nobleman departed to  
 execute his commission; and immediately took  
 such care of the captive princess and her house-  
 hold, that she seemed as perfectly obeyed, and  
 had every thing which belonged to her in as great  
 splendor now, as in her principality, and in the  
 height of fortune. He found her in every respect  
 deserving, and saw in her a generosity of soul  
 which was beyond her other charms. His study to  
 oblige her, and soften her distress, made her in  
 return desirous to express a gratitude; which he  
 easily perceived. She showed on every occasion a  
 real concern for his interest; and when he happened



to fall ill, she took such tender care of him herself, and by her servants, that he seemed to owe his recovery to her friendship.

From these beginnings, insensibly, and by natural degrees (as may easily be conceived), the youth fell desperately in love. At first he offered not to make the least mention of his passion to the princess. For he scarce dared tell it to himself. But afterwards he grew bolder. She received his declaration with an unaffected trouble and concern, spoke to him as a friend, to dissuade him as much as possible from such an extravagant attempt. But when he talked to her of force, she immediately sent away one of her faithful domestics to the prince, to implore his protection. The prince received the message with the appearance of more than ordinary concern; sent instantly for one of his first ministers; and bid him go with that domestic to the young nobleman, and let him understand, "That force was not to be offered to such a lady; persuasion he might use, if he thought fit."

The minister, who was no friend to the young nobleman, failed not to aggravate the message, inveighed publicly against him on this occasion, and to his face reproached him as a traitor, and dishonorer of his prince and nation; with all else which could be said against him, as guilty of the highest sacrilege, perfidiousness, and breach of trust. So that, in reality, the youth looked upon his case as desperate, fell into the deepest melancholy, and prepared himself for that fate which he thought he well deserved.



In this condition the prince sent to speak with him alone ; and when he saw him in the utmost confusion , “ I find , ” said he , “ my friend , I am  
 “ now become dreadful to you indeed ; since  
 “ you can neither see me without shame , nor  
 “ imagine me to be without resentment. But  
 “ away with all those thoughts from this time  
 “ forwards. I know how much you have suffered  
 “ on this occasion. I know the power of Love,  
 “ and am no otherwise safe myself , than by  
 “ keeping out of the way of beauty. It was  
 “ I who was in fault ; it was I who unhappily  
 “ matched you with that unequal adversary , and  
 “ gave you that impracticable task and hard ad-  
 “ venture , which no one yet was ever strong  
 “ enough to accomplish. ”

“ In this, Sir , ” replied the youth , “ as in all  
 “ else , you express that goodness which is so  
 “ natural to you. You have compassion, and can  
 “ allow for human frailty ; but the rest of mankind  
 “ will never cease to upbraid me. Nor shall I ever  
 “ be forgiven, were I able ever to forgive myself.  
 “ I am reproached by my nearest friends. I must  
 “ be odious to all mankind , wherever I am  
 “ known. The least punishment I can think  
 “ due to me , is banishment for ever from your  
 “ presence. ”

“ Think not of such a thing for ever , ” said the prince , “ but trust me : if you retire only  
 “ for a while , I shall so order it , that you shall  
 “ soon return again with the applause even of  
 “ those who are now your enemies , when they



“ find what a considerable service you shall have  
 “ rendered both to them and me. ”

Such a hint was sufficient to revive the spirits of our despairing youth. He was transported to think, that his misfortunes could be turned any way to the advantage of his prince. He entered with joy into the scheme the prince had laid for him, and appeared eager to depart, and execute what was appointed him. “ Can you then,” said the prince, “ resolve to quit the charming  
 “ princess ? ”

“ O Sir ! ” replied the youth, “ well am I now  
 “ satisfied, that I have in reality within me two  
 “ distinct separate souls. This lesson of philosophy  
 “ I have learned from that villanous sophister  
 “ Love. For it is impossible to believe, that  
 “ having one and the same soul, it should be  
 “ actually both good and bad, passionate for  
 “ virtue and vice, desirous of contraries. No.  
 “ There must of necessity be two : and when the  
 “ good prevails it is then we act handsomely ;  
 “ when the ill, then basely and villanously. Such  
 “ was my case. For lately the ill soul was wholly  
 “ master. But now the good prevails, by your  
 “ assistance ; and I am plainly a new creature,  
 “ with quite another apprehension, another reason,  
 “ another Will. ”

“ Thus it may appear, how far a lover, by his own natural strength, may reach the chief principle of philosophy, and understand our doctrine of two persons in one individual self. Not that our courtier, we suppose, was able, of himself, to



form this distinction justly, and according to art. For could he have effected this, he would have been able to cure himself, without the assistance of his prince. However, he was wise enough to see in the issue, that his independency and freedom were mere glosses, and resolution a nose of wax. For let Will be ever so free, humor and fancy, we see, govern it. And these, as free as we suppose them, are often changed, we know not how, without asking our consent, or giving us any account. If opinion be that which governs, and makes the change, it is itself as liable to be governed, and varied in its turn<sup>3</sup>. And by what I can observe of the world, fancy and opinion stand pretty much upon the same bottom. So that if there be no certain inspector or auditor established within us, to take account of these opinions and fancies in due form, and minutely to animadvert upon their several growths and habits, we are as little like to continue a day in the same will, as a tree during a summer in the same shape, without the gardener's assistance, and the vigorous application of the sheers and pruning-knife.

As cruel a court as the inquisition appears, there must, it seems, be full as formidable a one erected in ourselves, if we would pretend to that uniformity of opinion which is necessary to hold us to one will, and preserve us in the same mind from one day to another. Philosophy, at this

<sup>3</sup> Advice to an author, part 3. §. 2. parag. 29. in this volume; Misc. 4. chap. 1. parag. 21, 22, 23. in vol. 3.



rate, will be thought perhaps little better than persecution : and a supreme judge in matters of inclination and appetite , must needs go exceedingly against the heart. Every pretty fancy is disturbed by it ; every pleasure interrupted by it. The course of good humor will hardly allow it ; and the pleasantry of wit almost absolutely rejects it. It appears, besides, like a kind of pedantry, to be thus magisterial with ourselves ; thus strict over our imaginations ; and, with all the airs of a real pedagogue , to be solicitously taken up in the four care and tutorage of so many boyish fancies , unlucky appetites and desires , which are perpetually playing truant , and need correction.

We hope, however, that by our method of practice , and the help of the grand arcanum , which we have professed to reveal , this regimen or discipline of the fancies may not in the end prove so severe or mortifying as is imagined. We hope also that our patient (for such we naturally suppose our reader) will consider duly with himself, that what he endures in this operation is for no inconsiderable end ; since it is to gain him a will, and insure him a certain resolution ; by which he shall know where to find himself, be sure of his own meaning and design ; and as to all his desires, opinions, and inclinations, be warranted one and the same person to-day as yesterday, and to-morrow as to-day.

This, perhaps, will be thought a miracle by one who well considers the nature of mankind,



and the growth, variation, and inflection of appetite and humor. For Appetite, which is elder brother to Reason, being the lad of stronger growth, is sure, on every contest, to take the advantage of drawing all to his own side. And will, so highly boasted, is, at best, merely a top or foot-ball betwen these youngsters, who prove very unfortunately matched, till the youngest, instead of now and then a kick or lash bestowed to little purpose, forsakes the ball or top itself, and begins to lay about his elder brother. It is then that the scene changes. For the elder, like an arrant coward, upon this treatment, presently grows civil, and affords the younger as fair play afterwards as he can desire.

And here it is that our sovereign remedy and gymnastic method of Soliloquy takes its rise; when, by a certain powerful figure of inward rhetoric, the mind apostrophizes its own fancies, raises them in their proper shapes and personages, and addresses them familiarly, without the least ceremony or respect. By this means it will soon happen, that two formed parties will erect themselves within. For the imaginations or fancies being thus roundly treated, are forced to declare themselves, and take party. Those on the side of the elder brother Appetite, are strangely subtle and insinuating. They have always the faculty to speak by nods and winks. By this practice they conceal half their meaning; and, like modern politicians, pass for deeply wise, and adorn themselves with the finest pretext, and most specious



glosses imaginable ; till , being confronted with their fellows of a plainer language and expression, they are forced to quit their mysterious manner, and discover themselves mere sophisters and impostors , who have not the least to do with the party of Reason and good sense.

Accordingly we might now proceed to exhibit distinctly, and in due method, the form and manner of this probation or exercise, as it regards all men in general. But the case of authors in particular, being, as we apprehend, the most urgent, we shall apply our rule in the first place to these gentlemen, whom it so highly imports to know themselves , and understand the natural strength and powers, as well as the weaknesses of a human mind. For without this understanding, the historian's judgment will be very defective; the politician's views very narrow and chimerical; and the poet's brain, however stocked with fiction, will be but poorly furnished ; as in the sequel we shall make appear. He who deals in characters, must of necessity, know his own; or he will know nothing. And he who would give the world a profitable entertainment of this sort , should be sure to profit first by himself. For, in this sense, wisdom as well as charity may be honestly said to begin at home. There is no way of estimating manners, or apprising the different humors , fancies, passions , and apprehensions of others, without first taking an inventory of the same kind of goods within ourselves, and surveying our domestic fund. A little of this



home-practice will serve to make great discoveries.

*Tecum habita, et noris quam sit tibi curta suppellex.*

Perf. Sat. 4.

### S E C T. III.

WHOEVER has been an observer of action and grace in human bodies, must of necessity have discovered the great difference in this respect between such persons as have been taught by nature only, and such as, by reflection, and the assistance of art, have learned to form those motions which on experience are found the easiest and most natural. Of the former kind are either those good rustics, who have been bred remote from the formed societies of men; or those plain artificers, and people of lower rank, who, living in cities and places of resort, have been necessitated, however, to follow mean employments, and wanted the opportunity and means to form themselves after the better models. There are some persons indeed so happily formed by nature herself, that, with the greatest simplicity or rudeness of education, they have still something of a natural grace and comeliness in their action: and there are others of a better education, who, by a wrong aim and



injudicious affectation of grace, are of all people the farthest removed from it. It is undeniable, however, that the perfection of grace and comeliness in action and behaviour, can be found only among the people of a liberal education. And even among the graceful of this kind, those still are found the gracefullest, who early in their youth have learned their exercises, and formed their motions under the best masters.

Now, such as these masters and their lessons are to a fine gentleman, such are philosophers and philosophy to an author. The case is the same in the fashionable and in the literate world. In the former of these it is remarked, that, by the help of good company, and the force of example merely, a decent carriage is acquired, with such apt motions, and such a freedom of limbs, as on all ordinary occasions may enable the party to demean himself like a gentleman. But when, upon further occasion, trial is made in an extraordinary way; when exercises of the genteeler kind are to be performed in public, it will easily appear who of the pretenders have been formed by rudiments, and had masters in private; and who, on the other side, have contented themselves with bare imitation, and learned their part casually, and by rote. The parallel is easily made on the side of writers. They have at least as much need of learning the several motions, counterpoises, and balances of the mind and passions, as the other students those of the body and limbs.



<sup>1</sup> *Scribendi recte, sapere est et principium et fons.*

*Rem tibi SOCRATICÆ poterunt ostendere CHARTÆ.*

The gallant, no doubt, may pen a letter to his mistress, as the courtier may a compliment to the minister, or the minister to the favorite above him, without going such vast depths into learning or philosophy. But for these privileged gentlemen, though they set fashions and prescribe rules in other cases, they are no controllers in the commonwealth of letters. Nor are they presumed to write to the age, or for remote posterity. Their works are not of a nature to entitle them to hold the rank of authors, or be styled writers by way of excellence in the kind. Should their ambition lead them into such a field,

<sup>1</sup> *Hor. de art. poet.* See even the dissolute *Petronius's* judgment of a writer.

*Artis severæ si quis amat effectus,  
Mentemque magnis applicat; prius more  
Frugalitatis lege polleat exacta;  
Nec curet alto regiam trucem vultu.*

\* \* \* \* \*

————— *Neve plausor in scæna  
Sedeat redemptus, Histrionæ addictus.*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Mox et Socratico plenus grege, mutet habenas  
Liber, et ingentis quatiat Demosthenis arma.*

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

*His animum succinge bonis, sic flumine largo  
Plenus, Pierio defundes pectore verba.*



they would be obliged to come otherwise equipped. They who enter the public lists, must come duly trained, and exercised, like well-appointed cavaliers, expert in arms, and well instructed in the use of their weapon, and management of their steed. For to be well accoutred, and well mounted, is not sufficient. The horse alone can never make the horseman; nor limbs the wrestler or the dancer. No more can a genius alone make a poet, or good parts a writer, in any considerable kind. The skill and grace of writing is founded, as our wise poet tells us, in knowledge and good sense, and not barely in that knowledge which is to be learned from common authors, or the general conversation of the world; but from those particular rules of art which philosophy alone exhibits.

The philosophical writings to which our poet in his art of poetry refers, were in themselves a kind of poetry, like the mimes<sup>2</sup>, or personated pieces of early times, before philosophy was in vogue, and when as yet dramatical imitation was scarce formed; or at least, in many parts, not brought to due perfection. They were pieces which, besides their force of style, and hidden numbers, carried a sort of action and imitation, the same as the epic and dramatic kinds. They were either real dialogues, or recitals of such personated discourses; where the persons themselves

<sup>2</sup> Advice to an author, part 2. sect. 2. parag. 27. in the notes, in this volume.



had their characters preserved throughout; their manners, humors, and distinct turns of temper and understanding maintained, according to the most exact poetical truth. It was not enough that these pieces treated fundamentally of morals, and in consequence pointed out real characters and manners: they exhibited them alive, and set the countenances and complexions of men plainly in view. And by this means they not only taught us to know others, but, what was principal and of highest virtue in them, they taught us to know ourselves.

The philosophical hero of these poems, whose name they carried both in their body and front, and whose genius and manner they were made to represent, was in himself a perfect character; yet, in some respects, so veiled, and in a cloud, that to the unattentive surveyor he seemed often to be very different from what he really was: and this chiefly by reason of a certain exquisite and refined raillery which belonged to his manner, and by virtue of which he could treat the highest subjects and those of the commonest capacity both together, and render them explanatory of each other. So that in this genius of writing, there appeared both the heroic and the simple, the tragic and the comic vein. However, it was so ordered, that, notwithstanding the oddness or mysteriousness of the principal character, the under-parts or second characters showed human nature more distinctly, and to the life. We might here, therefore, as in a looking-glass,



discover ourselves, and see our minutest features nicely delineated, and suited to our own apprehension and cognisance. No one who was ever so little a while an inspector, could fail of becoming acquainted with his own heart. And, what was of singular note in these magical glasses, it would happen, that, by constant and long inspection, the parties accustomed to the practice would acquire a peculiar speculative habit, so as virtually to carry about with them a sort of pocket-mirror, always ready and in use. In this there were two faces which would naturally present themselves to our view: one of them like the commanding genius, the leader and chief above-mentioned; the other like that rude, undisciplined, and head-strong creature, whom we ourselves in our natural capacity most exactly resembled. Whatever we were employed in, whatever we set about; if once we had acquired the habit of this mirror, we should by virtue of the double reflection, distinguish ourselves into two different parties. And in this dramatic method, the work of self-inspection would proceed with admirable success.

It is no wonder that the primitive poets were esteemed such sages in their times; since it appears they were such well practised dialogists, and accustomed to this improving method, before ever philosophy had adopted it. Their mimes or characterized discourses were as much relished as their most regular poems; and were the occasion perhaps that so many of these latter were



formed into such perfection. For poetry itself was defined an imitation chiefly of men and manners; and was that in an exalted and noble degree, which in a low one we call mimicry. It is in this that the great mimographer, the father and prince of poets, excels so highly; his characters being wrought to a likeness beyond what any succeeding masters were ever able to describe<sup>3</sup>. Nor are his works, which are so full of action, any other than an artful series or chain of dialogues, which turn upon one remarkable catastrophe or event. He describes no qualities or virtues; censures no manners; makes no encomiums, nor gives characters himself; but brings his actors still in view. It is they who show themselves. It is they who speak in such a manner, as distinguishes them in all things from all others, and makes them ever like themselves. Their different compositions and allays so justly made, and equally carried on, through every particle of the action, give more instruction than all the comments or glosses in the world. The poet, instead of giving himself those dictating and masterly airs of wisdom, makes hardly any figure at all, and is scarce discoverable in his poem. This is being truly a master. He paints so as to need no inscription over his figures, to tell us what they are,

<sup>3</sup> Ὅμηρος δὲ ἄλλα τε πολλὰ ἄξιός ἐπαινεῖσθαι, καὶ δὴ καὶ ὅτι μόνος τῶν ποιητῶν, ἔκ ἀγνοεῖ ὃ δεῖ ποιεῖν αὐτόν. Ἀυτὸν γὰρ δεῖ τὸν ποιητὴν ἐλάχιστα λέγειν· ὃ γὰρ ἐστὶ κατὰ ταῦτα μιμητῆς· οἱ μὲν ἔν ἄλλοι, αὐτοὶ μὲν δὲ ὅλα ἀγωνίζονται, μιμῶντα δὲ εἰλίγα καὶ ὀλιγάκις. Arist. de poet. cap. 24.



or what he intends by them. A few words let fall, on any slight occasion, from any of the parties he introduces, are sufficient to denote their manners and distinct character. From a finger or a toe, he can represent to our thoughts the frame and fashion of a whole body. He wants no other help of art, to personate his heroes, and make them living. There was no more left for tragedy to do after him, than to erect a stage, and draw his dialogues and characters into scenes, turning in the same manner, upon one principal action or event, with that regard to place and time which was suitable to a real spectacle. Even comedy<sup>4</sup> itself was adjudged to this great master; it being derived from those parodies or mock-humors, of which he had given the specimen<sup>5</sup> in a concealed sort of raillery intermixed with the sublime. — A dangerous stroke of art! and which required a masterly hand, like that of the philosophical hero, whose character was represented in the dialogue-writings above-mentioned.

From whence possibly we may form a notion of that resemblance which on so many occasions was heretofore remarked between the prince of poets and the divine philosopher, who was said to rival him, and who, together with his contemporaries of the same school, writ wholly in that manner of dialogue above-described. From hence

<sup>4</sup> Advice to an author, part 2. sect. 2. parag. 20. 27. in the notes, in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Not only in his *Margites*, but even in his *Iliad* and *Odyssée*.



too we may comprehend, perhaps, why the study of dialogue was heretofore thought so advantageous to writers, and why this manner of writing was judged so difficult, which at first sight, it must be owned, appears the easiest of any.

I have formerly wondered, indeed, why a manner, which was familiarly used in treatises upon most subjects, with so much success among the ancients, should be so insipid and of so little esteem with us moderns. But I afterwards perceived, that besides the difficulty of the manner itself, and that mirror-faculty which we have observed it to carry in respect to ourselves, it proves also of necessity a kind of mirror or looking-glass to the age.

If so, it should of consequence (you will say) be the more agreeable and entertaining.

True; if the real view of ourselves be not perhaps displeasing to us.

But why more displeasing to us than to the ancients?

Because perhaps they could with just reason bear to see their natural countenances represented.

And why not we the same? What should discourage us? for are we not as handsome, at least, in our own eyes?

Perhaps not: as we shall see, when we have considered a little further what the force is of this mirror-writing, and how it differs from that more complaisant modish way, in which an author, instead of presenting us with other natural characters, sets off his own with the utmost art, and purchases his reader's favor by all imaginable compliances and condescensions.



An Author who writes in his own person, has the advantage of being who or what he pleases. He is no certain man, nor has any certain nor genuine character; but suits himself, on every occasion, to the fancy of his reader, whom as the fashion is now-a-days, he constantly caresses and cajoles. All turns upon their two persons. And as in an amour, or commerce of love-letters; so here the author has the privilege of talking eternally of himself, dressing and sprucing up himself; whilst he is making diligent court, and working upon the humor of the party to whom he addresses. This is the coquetry of a modern author; whose epistles dedicatory, prefaces, and addresses to the reader, are so many affected graces, designed to draw the attention from the subject towards himself; and make it be generally observed, not so much what he says, as what he appears, or is, and what figure he already makes, or hopes to make, in the fashionable world.

These are the airs which a neighbouring nation give themselves, more particularly in what they call their memoirs. Their very essays on politics, their philosophical and critical works, their comments upon ancient and modern authors, all their treatises, are memoirs. The whole writing of this age is become indeed a sort of memoir-writing: though in the real memoirs of the ancients, even when they writ at any time concerning themselves, there was neither the I nor Thou throughout the whole work. So that all this pretty amour and intercourse of caresses between the author and reader was thus entirely taken away.



Much more is this the case in Dialogue. For here the author is annihilated; and the reader being no way applied to, stands for no body. The self-interesting parties both vanish at once. The scene presents itself, as by chance, and undesigned. You are not only left to judge coolly, and with indifference, of the sense delivered; but of the character, genius, elocution, and manner of the persons who deliver it. These two are mere strangers, in whose favor you are no way engaged. Nor is it enough that the persons introduced speak pertinent and good sense, at every turn. It must be seen from what bottom they speak; from what principle, what stock or fund of knowledge they draw; and what kind or species of understanding they possess. For the understanding here must have its mark, its characteristic note, by which it may be distinguished. It must be such and such an understanding; as when we say, for instance, such or such a face: since nature has characterized tempers and minds as peculiarly as faces. And for an artist who draws naturally, it is not enough to show us merely faces which may be called men's: every face must be a certain man's.

Now, as a painter who draws battles or other actions of Christians, Turks, Indians, or any distinct and peculiar people, must of necessity draw the several figures of his piece in their proper and real proportions, gestures, habits, arms, or at least with as fair resemblance as possible; so in the same manner that writer, whoever he be,



among us moderns, who shall venture to bring his fellow-moderns into dialogue, must introduce them in their proper manners, genius, behaviour, and humor. And this is the mirror or looking-glass above-described.

For instance, a dialogue, we will suppose, is framed after the manner of our ancient authors. In it, a poor philosopher, of a mean figure, accosts one of the powerfulest, wittiest, handsomest, and richest noblemen of the time, as he is walking leisurely towards the temple. "You are going then," says he, (calling him by his plain name), "to pay your devotions yonder at the temple?" I am so. But with an air, methinks, as if some thought perplexed you. What is there in the case which should perplex one? The thought perhaps of your petitions, and the consideration what vows you had best offer to the deity. Is that so difficult? Can any one be so foolish as to ask of heaven what is not for his good? Not, if he understands what his good is. Who can mistake it, if he has common sense, and knows the difference between prosperity and adversity? It is prosperity therefore you would pray for. Undoubtedly. For instance, that absolute sovereign who commands all things by virtue of his immense treasures, and governs by his sole will and pleasure, him you think prosperous, and his state happy."

Whilst I am copying this, (for it is no more



indeed than a borrowed sketch from one of those originals before-mentioned), I see a thousand ridicules arising from the manner, the circumstances, and action itself, compared with modern breeding and civility. — Let us therefore mend the matter, if possible, and introduce the same philosopher, addressing himself in a more obsequious manner to his Grace, his Excellency, or his Honor; without failing in the least tittle of the ceremonial. Or let us put the case more favorably still for our man of letters. Let us suppose him to be incognito, without the least appearance of a character, which in our age is so little recommending. Let his garb and action be of the more modish sort, in order to introduce him better, and gain him audience. And with these advantages and precautions, imagine still in what manner he must accost this pageant of state, if at any time he finds him at leisure, walking in the fields alone, and without his equipage. Consider how many bows, and simpering faces! how many preludes, excuses, compliments! — Now, put compliments, put ceremony into a dialogue, and see what will be the effect!

This is the plain dilemma against that ancient manner of writing, which we can neither well imitate nor translate; whatever pleasure or profit we may find in reading those originals. For what shall we do in such a circumstance? What if the fancy takes us, and we resolve to try the experiment in modern subjects? See the consequence! — If we avoid ceremony, we are unnatural: if we  
use



use it, and appear as we naturally are, as we salute, and meet, and treat one another, we hate the sight. — What is this but hating our own faces? Is it the painter's fault? Should he paint falsely, or affectedly; mix modern with ancient, join shapes preposterously, and betray his art? If not, what medium is there? What remains for him, but to throw away the pencil? — No more designing after the life; no more mirror-writing, or personal representation of any kind whatever.

Thus dialogue is at an end. The ancients could see their own faces; but we cannot.

And why this? Why, but because we have less beauty? for so our looking-glass can inform us — Ugly instrument! and for this reason to be hated. — Our commerce and manner of conversation, which we think the politest imaginable, is such, it seems, as we ourselves cannot endure to see represented to the life. It is here as in our real portraitures, particularly those at full length, where the poor pencil-man is put to a thousand shifts, whilst he strives to dress us in affected habits, such as we never wore; because should he paint us in those we really wear, they would of necessity make the piece to be so much more ridiculous, as it was more natural, and resembling.

Thus much for antiquity, and those rules of art, those philosophical sea-cards, by which the adventurous geniuses of the times were wont to steer their courses, and govern their impetuous muse. These were the Chartæ of our Roman master-poet, and these the pieces of art, the



mirrors, the exemplars he bids us place before our eyes.

——— *Vos exemplaria Græca*

*Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna*\*.

And thus poetry and the writer's art, as in many respects it resembles the statuary's and the painter's, so in this more particularly, that it has its original draughts and models for study and practice; not for ostentation, to be shown abroad, or copied for public view. These are the ancient busts; the trunks of statues; the pieces of anatomy; the masterly rough drawings which are kept within; as the secret learning, the mystery, and fundamental knowledge of the art. There is this essential difference, however, between the artists of each kind, that they who design merely after bodies, and form the graces of this sort, can never, with all their accuracy, or correctness of design, be able to reform themselves, or grow a jot more shapely in their persons. But for those artists who copy from another life, who study the graces and perfections of minds, and are real masters of those rules which constitute this latter science; it is impossible they should fail of being themselves improved, and amended in their better part.

I must confess there is hardly any where to be found a more insipid race of mortals, than those whom we moderns are contented to call poets,

\* Hor. de arte poet. v. 263.



for having attained the chiming faculty of a language, with an injudicious, random use of wit and fancy. But for the man who truly, and in a just sense, deserves the name of poet, and who, as a real master or architect in the kind, can describe both men and manners, and give to an action it's just body and proportions, he will be found, if I mistake not, a very different creature. Such a poet is indeed a second maker; a just Prometheus, under Jove. Like that sovereign artist or universal, plastic nature he forms a whole, coherent and proportioned in itself, with due subjection and subordinancy of constituent parts. He notes the boundaries of the passions, and knows their exact tones and measures; by which he justly represents them, marks the sublime of sentiments and action, and distinguishes the beautiful from the deformed, the amiable from the odious. The moral artist, who can thus imitate the Creator, and is thus knowing in the inward form and structure of his fellow-creature, will hardly, I presume, be found unknowing in himself, or at a loss in those numbers which make the harmony of a mind. For knavery is mere dissonance and disproportion. And though villains may have strong tones and natural capacities of action, it is impossible that true judgment and ingenuity<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The maxim will hardly be disproved by fact or history, either in respect of philosophers themselves, or others who were the great geniuses or masters in the liberal arts. The characters of the two best *Roman* poets are well known. Those of the ancient *tragedians* no less. And the great epic master, though of an obscurer and



should reside, where harmony and honesty have no being.

But having entered thus seriously into the concerns of authors, and shown their chief foundation and strength, their preparatory discipline, and qualifying method of self-examination; it is fit ere we disclose this mystery any further, we should consider the advantages or disadvantages our authors may possibly meet with from abroad;

remoter age, was ever presumed to be far enough from a vile or knavish character. The *Roman* as well as the *Grecian* orator was true to his country; and died in like manner a martyr for its liberty. And those historians who are of highest value, were either in a private life *approved good men*, or noted such by their actions in the public. As for poets in particular, (says the learned and wise *Strabo*), “Can we possibly imagine, that the genius, power, and excellence of a real poet, consists in ought else than the just imitation of life, in formed discourse and numbers? But how should he be that just imitator of life, whilst he himself knows not its measures, nor how to guide himself by judgment and understanding? For we have not surely the same notion of the poet’s excellence as of the ordinary craftsman’s, the subject of whose art is senseless stone or timber, without life, dignity, or beauty; whilst the poet’s art turning principally on men and manners, he has his virtue and excellence, as poet, naturally annexed to human excellence, and to the worth and dignity of man; insomuch that it is impossible he should be a great and worthy poet, who is not first a worthy and good man.”

’Ου γὰρ ἔγω φαμέν τὴν τῶν ποιητῶν ἀρετὴν ὡς ἡ τεχνόνων ἢ χαλκίων &c. ἡ δὲ ποιητῆ συνέξυκται τῇ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ. καὶ ἔχ’ οἶόν τε ἀγαθὸν γενέσθαι ποιητὴν, μὴ πρότερον γενηθέντα ἄνδρα ἀγαθόν.

Lib. I. See below, part 2. sect. 3. parag. penult. & ult. part. 3. sect. 3. parag. 8. and 21. in the notes; and Misc. 5. chap. I. parag. 23, 24, 25, 26. chap. 2. parag. 6. &c. *ib.* parag. 14. in vol. 3.



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and how far their genius may be depressed or raised by any external causes, arising from the humor or judgment of the world.

Whatever it be which influences in this respect, must proceed either from the Grandees and men in power, the Critics and men of art, or the People themselves, the common audience, and mere vulgar. We shall begin, therefore, with the grandees, and pretended masters of the world; taking the liberty, in favor of authors, to bestow some advice also on these high persons; if possibly they are disposed to receive it in such a familiar way as this.



## P A R T II.

## S E C T. I.

AS usual as it is with mankind to act absolutely by will and pleasure, without regard to counsel, or the rigid method of rule and precept; it must be acknowledged, nevertheless, that the good and laudable custom of asking advice, is still upheld, and kept in fashion, as a matter of fair repute, and honorable appearance; infomuch that even monarchs, and absolute princes themselves, disdain not, we see, to make profession of the practice.

It is, I presume, on this account, that the royal persons are pleased, on public occasions, to make use of the noted style of We and Us. Not that they are supposed to have any converse with themselves, as being endowed with the privilege of becoming plural, and enlarging their capacity, in the manner above-described. Single and absolute persons in government, I am sensible, can hardly be considered as any other than single and absolute in morals. They have no inmate controller to cavil with them, or dispute their pleasure. Nor have they, from any practice abroad, been able, at any time, to learn the way of being free and



familiar themselves at home. Inclination and Will in such as these, admit as little restraint or check in private meditation as in public company. The world, which serves as a tutor to persons of an inferior rank, is submissive to these royal pupils; who, from their earliest days, are used to see even their instructors bend before them, and hear every thing applauded which they themselves perform.

For fear, therefore, lest their humor merely, or the caprice of some favorite, should be presumed to influence them, when they come to years of princely discretion, and are advanced to the helm of government; it has been esteemed a necessary decency, to summon certain advisers by profession, to assist as attendants to the single person, and be joined with him in his written edicts, proclamations, letters-patent, and other instruments of regal power. For this use, privy-counsellors have been erected; who being persons of considerable figure and wise aspect, cannot be supposed to stand as statues or mere ciphers in the government, and leave the royal acts erroneously and falsely described to us in the plural number; when, at the bottom, a single will or fancy was the sole spring and motive.

Foreign princes indeed have most of them that unhappy prerogative of acting unadvisedly and wilfully in their national affairs: but it is known to be far otherwise with the legal and just princes of our island. They are surrounded with the best of counsellors, the Laws. They administer civil



affairs by legal officers, who have the direction of their public will and conscience; and they annually receive advice and aid, in the most effectual manner, from their good people. To this wise genius of our constitution we may be justly said to owe our wisest and best princes; whose high birth, or royal education, could not alone be supposed to have given them that happy turn; since by experience we find, that those very princes, from whose conduct the world abroad, as well as we at home, have reaped the greatest advantages, were such as had the most controverted titles; and in their youth had stood in the remoter prospects of regal power, and lived the nearest to a private life.

Other princes we have had, who, though difficult perhaps in receiving counsel, have been eminent in the practice of applying it to others. They have listed themselves advisers in form; and, by publishing their admonitory works, have added to the number of those whom in this treatise we have presumed to criticise. But our criticism being withal an apology for authors, and a defence of the literate tribe; it cannot be thought amiss in us, to join the royal with the plebeian penmen, in this common cause.

It would be a hard case indeed, should the princes of our nation refuse to countenance the industrious race of authors; since their royal ancestors and predecessors have had such honor derived to them from this profession. It is to this they owe that bright jewel of their crown,



purchased by a warlike prince; who having assumed the author, and essayed his strength in the polemic writings of the school-divines, thought it an honor on this account to retain the title of Defender of the Faith.

Another prince, of a more pacific nature and fluent thought, submitting arms and martial discipline to the gown, and confiding in his princely science and profound learning, made his style and speech the nerve and sinew of his government. He gave us his works, full of wise exhortation and advice to his royal son, as well as of instruction to his good people; who could not without admiration observe their author-sovereign thus studious and contemplative in their behalf. It was then one might have seen our nation growing young and docile, with that simplicity of heart which qualified them to profit, like a scholar-people, under their royal preceptor. For, with abundant eloquence, he graciously gave lessons to his parliament, tutored his ministers, and edified the greatest churchmen and divines themselves; by whose suffrage he obtained the highest appellations which could be merited by the acuteest wit, and truest understanding. From hence the British nations were taught to own in common a Solomon for their joint sovereign, the founder of their late completed union. Nor can it be doubted that the pious treatise of self-discourse ascribed to the succeeding monarch, contributed in a great measure to his glorious and never-fading titles of Saint and Martyr.



However it be, I would not willingly take upon me to recommend this author-character to our future princes. Whatever crowns or laurels their renowned predecessors may have gathered in this field of honor, I should think, that, for the future, the speculative province might more properly be committed to private heads. It would be a sufficient encouragement to the learned world, and a sure earnest of the increase and flourishing of letters in our nation, if its sovereigns would be contented to be the patrons of wit, and vouchsafe to look graciously on the ingenious pupils of art. Or, were it the custom of their prime ministers to have any such regard, it would of itself be sufficient to change the face of affairs. A small degree of favor would insure the fortunes of a distressed and ruinous tribe, whose forlorn condition has helped to draw disgrace upon arts and sciences, and kept them far off from that politeness and beauty in which they would soon appear, if the aspiring genius of our nation were forwarded by the least care or culture.

There should not, one would think, be any need of courtship or persuasion to engage our grandees in the patronage of arts and letters. For in our nation, upon the foot things stand, and as they are likely to continue, it is not difficult to foresee, that improvements will be made in every art and science. The Muses will have their turn; and, with or without their Mæcenases, will grow in credit and esteem, as they arrive



to greater perfection, and excel in every kind. There will arise such spirits as would have credited their court-patrons, had they found any so wise as to have fought them out betimes, and contributed to their rising greatness.

It is scarce a quarter of an age since such a happy balance of power was settled between our prince and people, as has firmly secured our hitherto precarious liberties, and removed from us the fear of civil commotions, wars, and violence, either on account of religion and worship, the property of the subject, or the contending titles of the crown. But as the greatest advantages of this world are not to be bought at easy prices; we are still at this moment expending both our blood and treasure, to secure to ourselves this inestimable purchase of our free government and national constitution. And as happy as we are in this establishment at home, we are still held in a perpetual alarm by the aspect of affairs abroad, and by the terror of that power, which, ere mankind had well recovered the misery of those barbarous ages consequent to the Roman yoke, has again threatened the world with a universal monarchy, and a new abyss of ignorance and superstition.

The British Muses, in this din of arms, may well lie abject and obscure, especially being as yet in their mere infant-state. They have hitherto scarce arrived to any thing of shapeliness or person. They lisp as in their cradles; and their stammering tongues, which nothing beside their youth and



rawness can excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretched pun and quibble. Our dramatic Shakespear, our Fletcher, Jonson, and our epic Milton, preserve this style. And even a latter race, scarce free of this infirmity, and aiming at a false sublime, with crowded simile and mixed metaphor, (the hobby-horse and rattle of the Muses), entertain our raw fancy, and unpractised ear; which has not as yet had leisure to form itself, and become truly musical<sup>1</sup>.

But those reverend bards, rude as they were, according to their time and age, have provided us, however, with the richest ore. To their eternal honor, they have withal been the first of Europeans, who, since the Gothic model of poetry, attempted to throw off the horrid discord of jingling rhyme. They have asserted ancient poetic liberty, and have happily broken the ice for those who are to follow them; and who treading in their footsteps, may at leisure polish our language, lead our ear to finer pleasure, and find out the true rhythmus, and harmonious numbers, which alone can satisfy a just judgment, and muse-like apprehension.

It is evident, our natural genius shines above that airy neighbouring nation; of whom, however, it must be confessed, that, with truer pains and industry, they have sought politeness, and studied to give the muses their due body and proportion, as well as the natural ornaments of cor-

<sup>1</sup> Misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 38, 39. in vol. 3.



rectness, chastity, and grace of style. From the plain model of the ancients, they have raised a noble satirist<sup>2</sup>. In the epic kind their attempts have been less successful. In the dramatic they have been so happy as to raise their stage to as great perfection as the genius of their nation will permit. But the high spirit of tragedy can ill subsist where the spirit of liberty is wanting. The genius of this poetry consists in the lively representation of the disorders and misery of the great; to the end that the people, and those of a lower condition, may be taught the better to content themselves with privacy, enjoy their safer state, and prize the equality and justice of their guardian Laws. If this be found agreeable to the just tragic model which the ancients have delivered to us; it will easily be conceived how little such a model is proportioned to the capacity or taste of those, who, in a long series of degrees, from the lowest peasant to the high slave of royal blood, are taught to idolize the next in power above them, and think nothing so adorable as that unlimited greatness, and tyrannic power, which is raised at their own expense, and exercised over themselves.

It is easy, on the other hand, to apprehend the advantages of our Britain in this particular; and what effect its established liberty will produce in every thing which relates to art, when peace returns to us on these happy conditions. It was

<sup>2</sup> Boileau.



the fate of Rome, to have scarce an intermediate age, or single period of time, between the rise of arts and fall of liberty. No sooner had that nation begun to lose the roughness and barbarity of their manners, and learn of Greece to form their heroes, their orators and poets, on a right model, than, by their unjust attempt upon the liberty of the world, they justly lost their own. With their liberty, they lost not only their force of eloquence, but even their style and language itself. The poets who afterwards arose amongst them, were mere unnatural and forced plants. Their two most accomplished, who came last, and closed the scene, were plainly such as had seen the days of liberty, and felt the sad effects of its departure. Nor had these been ever brought in play, otherwise than through the friendship of the famed Mæcenas, who turned a prince naturally cruel and barbarous, to the love and courtship of the Muses<sup>3</sup>. These tutoreesses formed in their royal pupil a new nature. They taught him how to charm mankind. They were more to him than his arms or military virtue; and, more than Fortune herself, assisted him in his greatness, and made his usurped dominion so enchanting to the world, that it could see without regret, its chains of bondage firmly rivetted. The corrupting sweets of such a poisonous government were not indeed long-lived. The bitter soon suc-

<sup>3</sup> Advice to an author, part 2. § 3. parag. 13. 14. in the notes, in this volume.



ceeded : and, in the issue, the world was forced to bear with patience those natural and genuine tyrants, who succeeded to this specious machine of arbitrary and universal power.

And now that I am fallen unawares into such profound reflections on the periods of government, and the flourishing and decay of liberty and letters, I cannot be contented to consider merely of the enchantment which wrought so powerfully upon mankind, when first this universal monarchy was established. I must wonder still more, when I consider how, after the extinction of this Cæsarean and Claudian family, and a short interval of princes raised and destroyed with much disorder and public ruin, the Romans should regain their perishing dominion, and retrieve their sinking state, by an after-race of wise and able princes, successively adopted, and taken from a private state to rule the empire of the world. They were men who not only possessed the military virtues, and supported that sort of discipline in the highest degree; but as they fought the interest of the world, they did what was in their power to restore liberty, and raise again the perishing arts, and decayed virtue of mankind. But the season was now past! the fatal form of government was become too natural; and the world, which had bent under it, and was become slavish and dependent, had neither power nor will to help itself. The only deliverance it could expect, was from the merciless hands of the Barbarians, and a total dissolution of that enormous



empire and despotic power, which the best hands could not preserve from being destructive to human nature. For even barbarity and Gothicism were already entered into arts, ere the savages had made any impression on the empire. All the advantage which a fortuitous, and almost miraculous succession of good princes, could procure their highly-favored arts and sciences, was no more, than to preserve, during their own time, those perishing remains, which had for a while with difficulty subsisted, after the decline of liberty<sup>4</sup>. Not a statue, not a medal, not a tolerable piece of architecture, could show itself afterwards, Philosophy, wit, and learning, in which some of those good princes had themselves been so renowned, fell with them; and ignorance and darkness overspread the world, and fitted it for the chaos and ruin which ensued.

We are now in an age when Liberty is once again in its ascendant. And we are ourselves the happy nation, who not only enjoy it at home, but, by our greatness and power, give life and vigor to it abroad, and are the head and chief of the European league, founded on this common cause. Nor can it, I presume, be justly feared, that we should lose this noble ardor, or faint under the glorious toil, though like ancient Greece, we should, for succeeding ages, be contending with a foreign power, and endeavouring to

<sup>4</sup> Advice to an author, part 2. § 2. parag. 12, 13. Ib. part 3. § 3. parag. 12. in the notes, in this volume.



reduce the exorbitancy of a grand monarch. It is with us at present, as with the Roman people in those early days, when they wanted only repose from arms to apply themselves to the improvement of arts and studies'. We should in this case, need no ambitious monarch to be allured, by hope of fame, or secret views of power, to give pensions abroad, as well as at home, and purchase flattery from every profession and science. We should find a better fund within ourselves; and might, without such assistance, be able to excel, by our own virtue and emulation.

Well it would be indeed, and much to the honor of our nobles and princes, would they freely help in this affair; and, by a judicious application of their bounty, facilitate this happy birth, of which I have ventured to speak in a prophetic style. It would be of no small advantage to them during their life; and would, more than all their other labors, procure them an immortal memory. For they must remember, that their fame is in the hands of penmen; and that the greatest actions lose their force, and perish in the custody of unable and mean writers.

Let a nation remain ever so rude and barbarous, it must have its poets, rhapsoders, historiographers, antiquaries of some kind or other, whose business it will be, to recount its remarkable

*' Serus enim Græcis admoovit acumina chartis ;*

*Et post Punica bella quietus, quærere cæpit,*

*Quid Sophocles, et Thespis, et Æschylus utile ferrent.*

*Hor. epist. i. lib. 2.*



transactions, and record the achievements of its civil and military heroes. And though the military kind may happen to be the furthest removed from any acquaintance with letters, or the muses; they are yet, in reality, the most interested in the cause and party of these remembrancers. The greatest share of fame and admiration falls naturally on the armed worthies. The great in council are second in the muses' favor. But if worthy poetic geniuses are not found, nor able penmen raised, to rehearse the lives, and celebrate the high actions of great men, they must be traduced by such recorders as chance presents. We have few modern heroes, who, like Xenophon or Cæsar, can write their own commentaries. And the raw memoir-writings, and unformed pieces of modern statesmen, full of their interested and private views, will, in another age, be of little service to support their memory or name; since already the world begins to sicken with the kind. It is the learned, the able, and disinterested historian, who takes place at last. And when the signal poet, or herald of fame, is once heard, the inferior trumpets sink in silence and oblivion.

But supposing it were possible for the hero or statesman to be absolutely unconcerned for his memory, or what came after him; yet, for the present merely, and during his own time, it must be of importance to him, to stand fair with the men of letters and ingenuity, and to have the character and repute of being favorable to their art. Be the illustrious person ever so high or awful in



his station, he must have descriptions made of him in verse and prose, under feigned or real appellations. If he be omitted in sound ode, or lofty epic, he must be sung at least in doggerel, and plain ballad. The people will needs have his effigies, though they see his person ever so rarely; and if he refuses to sit to the good painter, there are others, who, to oblige the public, will take the design in hand. We shall take up with what presents; and rather than be without the illustrious physiognomy of our great man, shall be contented to see him portraited by the artist who serves to illustrate prodigies in fairs, and adorn heroic sign-posts. The ill paint of this kind cannot, it is true, disgrace his excellency; whose privilege it is, in common with the royal issue, to be raised to this degree of honor, and to invite the passenger or traveller by his signal representative. It is supposed in this case that there are better pictures current of the hero; and that such as these are no true or favorable representations. But in another sort of limning, there is great danger, lest the hand should disgrace the subject. Vile encomiums, and wretched panegyrics, are the worst of satires; and when sordid and low geniuses make their court successfully in one way, the generous and able are aptest to revenge it in another.

All things considered, as to the interest of our potentates and Grandees, they appear to have only this choice left them, either wholly, if possible, to suppress letters, or give a helping hand



towards their support. Wherever the author-practice and liberty of the pen has in the least prevailed, the governors of the state must be either considerable gainers or sufferers by its means. So that it would become them, either by a right Turkish policy, to strike directly at the profession, and overthrow the very art and mystery itself, or with alacrity to support and encourage it, in the right manner, by a generous and impartial regard to merit. To act narrowly, or by halves, or with indifference and coolness, or fantastically, and by humor merely, will scarce be found to turn to their account. They must do justice, that justice may be done them in return. It will be in vain for our Alexanders to give orders, that none besides a Lysippus should make their statue, nor any besides an Apelles should draw their picture. Insolent intruders will do themselves the honor to practise on the features of these heroes. And a vile Chærilus, after all, shall, with their own consent perhaps, supply the room of a deserving and noble artist.

In a government where the people are sharers in power, but no distributors or dispensers of rewards, they expect it of their princes and great men, that they should supply the generous part, and bestow honor and advantages on those from whom the nation itself may receive honor and advantage. It is expected, that they who are high and eminent in the state, should not only provide for its necessary safety and subsistence, but omit nothing which may contribute to its



dignity and honor. The arts and sciences must not be left patronless. The public itself will join with the good wits and judges, in the resentment of such a neglect. It is no small advantage, even in an absolute government, for a ministry to have wit on their side, and engage the men of merit in this kind to be their well-wishers and friends. And in those states where ambitious leaders often contend for the supreme authority, it is a considerable advantage to the ill cause of such pretenders, when they can obtain a name and interest with the men of letters. The good Emperor Trajan, though himself no mighty scholar, had his due as well as an Augustus; and was as highly celebrated for his munificence, and just encouragement of every art and virtue. And Cæsar, who could write so well himself, and maintained his cause by wit as well as arms, knew experimentally what it was to have even a Catullus his enemy; and, though lashed so often in his lampoons, continued to forgive and court him. The traitor knew the importance of this mildness. May none who have the same designs, understand so well the advantages of such a conduct! I would have required only this one defect in Cæsar's generosity, to have been secure of his never rising to greatness, or enslaving his native country. Let him have shown a ruggedness and austerity towards free geniuses, or a neglect or contempt towards men of wit; let him have trusted to his arms, and declared against arts and letters; and he would



have proved a second Marius, or a Catiline of meaner fame and character.

It is, I know, the imagination of some who are called great men, that, in regard of their high stations, they may be esteemed to pay a sufficient tribute to letters, and discharge themselves as to their own part in particular; if they chuse indifferently any subject for their bounty, and are pleased to confer their favor either on some one pretender to art, or promiscuously to such of the tribe of writers, whose chief ability has lain in making their court well, and obtaining to be introduced to their acquaintance. This they think sufficient to instal them patrons of wit, and masters of the literate order. But this method will of any other the least serve their interest or design. The ill placing of rewards is a double injury to merit; and, in every cause or interest, passes for worse than mere indifference or neutrality. There can be no excuse for making an ill choice. Merit in every kind is easily discovered, when sought. The public itself fails not to give sufficient indication; and points out those geniuses who want only countenance and encouragement to become considerable. An ingenious man never starves unknown: and great men must wink hard, or it would be impossible for them to miss such advantageous opportunities of showing their generosity, and acquiring the universal esteem, acknowledgments, and good wishes of the ingenious and learned part of mankind.



## S E C T. II.

WHAT judgment, therefore, we are to form concerning the influence of our grandees in matters of art, and letters, will easily be gathered from the reflections already made. It may appear from the very freedom we have taken in censuring these men of power, what little reason authors have to plead them as their excuse for any failure in the improvement of their art and talent. For in a free country, such as ours, there is not any order or rank of men more free than that of writers; who, if they have real ability and merit, can fully right themselves when injured; and are ready furnished with means sufficient to make themselves considered by the men in highest power.

Nor should I suspect the genius of our writers, or charge them with meanness and insufficiency on the account of this low-spiritedness which they discover, were it not for another sort of fear, by which they more plainly betray themselves, and seem conscious of their own defect. The Critics, it seems, are formidable to them. The Critics are the dreadful spectres, the giants, the enchanters, who traverse and disturb them in their works. These are the persecutors, for whose sake they are ready to hide their heads; begging rescue and protection of all good people; and flying in particular to the great, by whose favor they hope



to be defended from this merciless examining race.  
 “ For what can be more cruel, than to be forced  
 “ to submit to the rigorous laws of wit, and write  
 “ under such severe judges as are deaf to all  
 “ courtship, and can be wrought upon by no  
 “ insinuation or flattery to pass by faults, and  
 “ pardon any transgression of art ? ”

To judge indeed of the circumstances of a modern author, by the pattern of his prefaces, dedications, and introductions<sup>1</sup>, one would think, that, at the moment when a piece of his was in hand, some conjuration was forming against him, some diabolical powers drawing together to blast his work, and cross his generous design. He therefore rouses his indignation, hardens his forehead, and with many furious defiance and Avaunt-Satans ! enters on his business ; not with the least regard to what may justly be objected to him in a way of Criticism ; but with an absolute contempt of the manner and art itself.

“ Odi profanum vulgus et arceo , ” was in its time, no doubt, a generous defiance. The avaunt ! was natural and proper in its place ; especially where religion and virtue were the poet’s theme. But with our moderns the case is generally the very reverse. And accordingly the defiance or avaunt should run much after this manner : “ As for you  
 “ vulgar souls, mere naturals, who know no art,  
 “ were never admitted into the temple of wisdom,

<sup>1</sup> Infra, part 3. sect. 3. parag. 1, 2. ; Misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 39. in the notes ; ib. chap. 2. parag. 11. in the notes, in vol. 3.



“ nor ever visited the sanctuaries of wit or learning,  
 “ gather yourselves together from all parts, and  
 “ hearken to the song or tale I am about to utter.  
 “ But for you men of science and understanding,  
 “ who have ears and judgment, and can weigh  
 “ sense, scan syllables, and measure sounds; you  
 “ who by a certain art distinguish false thought  
 “ from true, correctness from rudeness, and bom-  
 “ bast and chaos from order and the sublime;  
 “ away hence! or stand aloof! whilst I practise  
 “ upon the easiness of those mean capacities and  
 “ apprehensions who make the most numerous  
 “ audience, and are the only competent judges of  
 “ my labors.”

It is strange to see how differently the vanity  
 of mankind runs, in different times and seasons.  
 It is at present the boast of almost every enter-  
 priser in the Muses’ art, “That by his genius alone,  
 “ and a natural rapidity of style and thought, he  
 “ is able to carry all before him; that he  
 “ plays with his business, does things in passing,  
 “ at a venture, and in the quickest period of  
 “ time.” In the days of Attic elegance, as works  
 were then truly of another form and turn, so  
 workmen were of another humor, and had their  
 vanity of a quite contrary kind. They became  
 rather affected in endeavouring to discover the  
 pains they had taken to be correct. They were  
 glad to insinuate how laboriously, and with what  
 expense of time, they had brought the smallest  
 work of theirs (as perhaps a single ode or satire,  
 an oration or panegyric) to its perfection. When



they had so polished their piece, and rendered it so natural and easy, that it seemed only a lucky flight, a hit of thought, or flowing vein of humor; they were then chiefly concerned lest it should in reality pass for such, and their artifice remain undiscovered. They were willing it should be known how serious their play was; and how elaborate their freedom and facility; that they might say as the agreeable and polite poet, glancing on himself,

*Ludentis speciem dabit, et torquebitur*<sup>2</sup> —

And,

————— *Ut sibi quisvis*  
*Speret idem, sudet multum, frustra que laboret*  
*Ausus idem; tantum series juncturaque pollet*<sup>3</sup>.

Such accuracy of workmanship requires a Critic's eye. It is lost upon a vulgar judgment. Nothing grieves a real artist more than that indifference of the public, which suffers work to pass uncriticised. Nothing, on the other side, rejoices him more, than the nice view and inspection of the accurate examiner and judge of work. It is the mean genius, the slovenly performer, who knowing nothing of true workmanship, endeavours, by the best outward gloss and dazzling show, to turn the eye from a direct and steady survey of his piece.

<sup>2</sup> Hor. epist. 2. lib. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Id. de arte poet.



What is there which an expert musician more earnestly desires, than to perform his part in the presence of those who are knowing in his art? It is to the ear alone he applies himself; the critical, the nice ear. Let his hearers be of what character they please: be they naturally austere, morose, or rigid; no matter, so they are critics, able to censure, remark, and sound every accord and symphony. What is there mortifies the good painter more, than when, amidst his admiring spectators, there is not one present, who has been used to compare the hands of different masters, or has an eye to distinguish the advantages or defects of every style? Through all the inferior orders of mechanics, the rule is found to hold the same. In every science, every art, the real masters, or proficient, rejoice in nothing more, than in thorough search and examination of their performances, by all the rules of art and nicest criticism. Why therefore, in the Muses' name! is it not the same with our pretenders to the writing art, our poets, and prose-authors in every kind? Why in this profession are we found such critic-haters, and indulged in this unlearned aversion; unless it be taken for granted, that as wit and learning stand at present in our nation, we are still upon the foot of empirics and mountebanks?

From these considerations, I take upon me absolutely to condemn the fashionable and prevailing custom of inveighing against Critics, as the common enemies, the pests, and incendiaries of the commonwealth of wit and letters. I assert, on



the contrary, that they are the props and pillars of this building; and that without the encouragement and propagation of such a race, we should remain as Gothic architects as ever.

\* In the weaker and more imperfect societies of mankind, such as those composed of federate tribes, or mixed colonies, scarce settled in their new seats, it might pass for sufficient good-fortune, if the people proved only so far masters of language, as to be able to understand one another, in order to confer about their wants, and provide for their common necessities. Their exposed and indigent state could not be presumed to afford them either that full leisure, or easy disposition which was requisite to raise them to any curiosity of speculation. They who were neither safe from violence, nor secure of plenty, were unlikely to engage in unnecessary arts. Nor could it be expected they should turn their attention towards the numbers of their language, and the harmonious sounds which they accidentally emitted. But when, in process of time, the affairs of the society were settled on an easy and secure foundation; when debates and discourses on these subjects of common interest, and public good, were grown familiar; and the speeches of prime men and leaders were considered, and compared together; there would naturally be observed, not only a more agreeable measure of sound, but a happier and more easy

\* As to this, and what remains of the section, see Misc. 3. chap. 1. parag. 7. &c. in vol. 3.



rangement of thoughts, in one speaker, than in another.

It may easily be perceived from hence, that the goddess Persuasion must have been in a manner the mother of poetry, rhetoric, music, and the other kindred arts. For it is apparent, that where chief men and leaders had the strongest interest to persuade, they used the highest endeavours to please. So that in such a state or polity as has been described, not only the best order of thought, and turn of fancy, but the most soft and inviting numbers, must have been employed, to charm the public ear, and to incline the heart, by the agreeableness of expression.

Almost all the ancient masters of this sort were said to have been Musicians. And tradition, which soon grew fabulous, could not better represent the first founders or establishers of these larger societies, than as real songsters, who, by the power of their voice and lyre, could charm the wildest beasts, and draw the rude forests and rocks into the form of fairest cities. Nor can it be doubted, that the same artists, who so industriously, applied themselves to study the numbers of speech, must have made proportionable improvements in the study of mere sounds and natural harmony; which, of itself, must have considerably contributed towards the softening the rude manners and harsh temper of their new people.

If therefore it so happened in these free communities, made by consent and voluntary association, that, after a while, the power of one,



or of a few, grew prevalent over the rest; if Force took place, and the affairs of the society were administered without their concurrence, by the influence of awe and terror: it followed, that these pathetic sciences and arts of speech were little cultivated, since they were of little use. But where Persuasion was the chief means of guiding the society; where the people were to be convinced before they acted; there elocution became considerable; there orators and bards were heard, and the chief geniuses and sages of the nation betook themselves to the study of those arts, by which the people were rendered more treatable in a way of reason and understanding, and more subject to be led by men of science and erudition. The more these artists courted the public, the more they instructed it. In such constitutions as these, it was the interest of the wise and able, that the community should be judges of ability and wisdom. The high esteem of ingenuity was what advanced the ingenious to the greatest honors. And they who rose by science, and politeness in the higher arts, could not fail to promote that taste and relish to which they owed their personal distinction and pre-eminence.

Hence it is that those arts have been delivered to us in such perfection by free nations; who, from the nature of their government, as from a proper soil, produced the generous plants: whilst the mightiest bodies and vastest empires, governed by force and a despotic power, could, after ages of peace and leisure, produce no other than what was deformed and barbarous of the kind.



When the persuasive arts were grown thus into repute, and the power of moving the affections become the study and emulation of the forward wits and aspiring geniuses of the times; it would necessarily happen, that many geniuses of equal size and strength, though less covetous of public applause, of power, or of influence over mankind, would content themselves with the contemplation merely of these enchanting arts. These they would the better enjoy, the more they refined their taste, and cultivated their ear. For to all music there must be an ear proportionable. There must be an art of hearing found, ere the performing arts can have their due effect, or any thing exquisite in the kind be felt or comprehended. The just performers therefore in each art, would naturally be the most desirous of improving and refining the public ear; which they could no way so well effect, as by the help of those latter geniuses, who were in a manner their interpreters to the people; and who, by their example, taught the public to discover what was just and excellent in each performance.

Hence was the origin of Critics; who, as arts and sciences advanced, would necessarily come withal into repute; and being heard with satisfaction in their turn, were at length tempted to become authors, and appear in public. These were honored with the name of sophists; a character which in early times was highly respected. Nor did the gravest philosophers, who were censors of manners, and Critics of a higher degree, disdain



to exert their criticism in the inferior arts; especially in those relating to speech, and the power of argument and persuasion.

When such a race as this was once risen, it was no longer possible to impose on mankind by what was specious and pretending. The public would be paid in no false wit or jingling eloquence. Where the learned Critics were so well received, and philosophers themselves disdained not to be of the number; there could not fail to arise critics of an inferior order, who would subdivide the several provinces of this empire. Etymologists, philologists, grammarians, rhetoricians, and others of considerable note, and eminent in their degree, would every where appear, and vindicate the truth and justice of their art, by revealing the hidden beauties which lay in the works of just performers; and by exposing the weak sides, false ornaments, and affected graces of mere pretenders. Nothing of what we call sophistry in argument, or bombast in style; nothing of the effeminate kind, or of the false tender, the pointed witticism, the disjointed thought, the crowded simile, or the mixed metaphor, could pass even on the common ear: whilst the Notaries, the Expositors, and Prompters above-mentioned, were every where at hand, and ready to explode the unnatural manner.

It is easy to imagine, that, amidst the several styles and manners of discourse or writing, the easiest attained, and earliest practised, was the miraculous, the pompous, or what we generally call the sublime.

Astonishment



Astonishment is of all other passions the easiest raised in raw and unexperienced mankind. Children in their earliest infancy are entertained in this manner: and the known way of pleasing such as these, is to make them wonder, and lead the way for them in this passion, by a feigned surprise at the miraculous objects we set before them. The best music of barbarians is hideous and astonishing sounds. And the fine fights of Indians are enormous figures, various odd and glaring colors, and whatever of that sort is amazingly beheld, with a kind of horror and consternation.

In poetry, and studied prose, the astonishing part, or what commonly passes for sublime, is formed by the variety of figures, the multiplicity of metaphors', and by quitting as much as possible

Ἡ Λέξεως δὲ ἀρετὴ σαφὴ καὶ μὴ ταπεινὴ εἶναι. Σαφεστάτη μὲν ἔν  
 ἔστιν ἢ ἐκ τῶν κυρίων ὀνομάτων, ἀλλὰ ταπεινὴ. \* \* \* Σεμνὴ δὲ  
 καὶ ἐξαλλάττεται τὸ ἰδιωτικόν, ἢ τοῖς ξενικοῖς κεχρημένη. Ξενικὸν  
 δὲ λέγω, γλῶτταν, καὶ μεταφορὰν, καὶ ἐπέκτασιν, καὶ πᾶν τὸ παρὰ τὸ  
 κύριον. Ἀλλ' ἂν τις ἅμα ἅπαντα τὰ τοιαῦτα ποιήσῃ, ἢ αἰνιγμα  
 εἶναι, ἢ βαρβαρισμός. Ἄν μὲν ἔν ἐκ μεταφορῶν, αἰνιγμα εἶναι  
 δὲ ἐκ γλῶττων, καὶ βαρβαρισμός. Arist. de poet. cap. 22. This  
 the same master-critic explains further in his *rhethorics*, lib. 3.  
 cap. 1. where he refers to these passages of his *poetics*. Ἐπεὶ  
 δὲ οἱ Ποιηταὶ λέγοντες αἰήθη, διὰ τὴν λέξιν ἐδόκεον πορισθαι τὴν  
 δε τὴν ὁδὸν, διὰ τῆς ποιητικῆς πρώτης ἐγένετο λέξις, \* \* \* \* καὶ νῦν  
 ἔτι οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀπαιδευτῶν, τὰς τοιαύτας οἰοῦνται διαλέγεσθαι κάλ  
 λιστα τῆς δ' ἐκ ἔστιν. \* \* \* Ἐδὲ γὰρ οἱ τὰς τραγωδίας ποιῶντες,  
 ἔτι χρῶνται τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον. Ἀλλ' ὥσπερ καὶ ἐκ τῶν τετραμέτρων  
 εἰς τὸ ἰαμβεῖον μετέβησαν, διὰ τὸ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς τῶν μέτρων ὁμοιότητον  
 εἶναι τῶν ἄλλων, ἔγω καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἀφῆκασιν, ὅσα παρὰ τὴν διάλεκτον  
 εἰσιν. \* \* \* καὶ ἔτι νῦν οἱ τὰ ἑξάμετρα ποιῶντες, ἀφῆκασιν. Διὸ γελοῖον  
 μιμῆσθαι τῆς, οἱ αὐτοὶ ἐκ ἔτι χρῶνται ἐκείνῳ τῷ τρόπῳ. That



the natural and easy way of expression, for that which is most unlike to humanity, or ordinary use. This the prince of critics assures us to have been the manner of the earliest poets, before the age of Homer; or till such time as this father-poet came into repute, who deposed that spurious race, and gave rise to a legitimate and genuine kind. He retained only what was decent of the figurative or metaphoric style, introduced the natural and simple, and turned his thoughts towards the real beauty of composition, the unity of design, the truth of characters, and the just imitation of nature in each particular.

The manner of this father-poet was afterwards variously imitated, and divided into several shares; especially when it came to be copied in dramatic. Tragedy came first, and took what was most solemn and sublime. In this part the poets succeeded sooner than in Comedy, or the facetious kind; as was natural indeed to suppose, since this was in reality the easiest manner of the two, and capable of being brought the soonest to perfection. For so the same prince of critics sufficiently informs us. And it is highly worth remarking, what

among the early reformers of this *bombastic* manner, he places *Homer* as the chief, we may see easily in his *poetics*. As particularly in that passage, cap. 24. Ἐπὶ τὰς διανοίας καὶ τὴν λέξιν ἔχειν καλῶς, οἷς ἅπασιν Ὅμηρος κέχρηται, καὶ πρῶτος καὶ ἰκανῶς.  
\* \* \* Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις λέξει καὶ διανοίᾳ πάντας ὑπερβέβληκε.

Γενομένης δὲ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀντισχεδιαστικῆς, καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ ἡ κωμῳδία, Ἔς. de poet. cap. 4. When he has compared both this and tragedy together, he recapitulates in his next chapter. Αἱ μὲν δὲ τῆς τραγωδίας μετὰβάσεις, καὶ δι' ὧν ἐγενοντο, ἔλελήθασιν. Ἡ



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this mighty genius and judge of arts declares concerning Tragedy; that whatever idea might be formed of the utmost perfection of this kind of poem, it could in practice rise no higher than it had been already carried in his time: "having at length," says he, "attained its ends, and "being apparently consummate in itself." But for

δὲ κωμῳδία, διὰ τὸ μὴ σπευδάσθαι ἐξ ἀρχῆς, ἔλαθεν. Καὶ γὰρ χορὸν κωμῳδῶν ὁψέ ποτε ὁ Ἄρχων ἔδωκεν. *Esc. cap. 5.* See vol. 3. misc. 3. chap. 1. parag. 9. in the notes.

⁷ Καὶ πολλὰς μεταβολὰς μεταβαλῶσα ἡ τραγωδία ἐπαύσατο, ἐπεὶ ἔσχε τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν. *Cap. 4.* So true a prophet as well as critic was this great man. For, by the event, it appeared, that tragedy being raised to its height by *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, and no room left for further excellence or emulation, there were no more tragic poets besides these endured, after the author's time. Whilst comedy went on, improving still to the second and third degree, tragedy finished its course under *Euripides*; whom, though our great author criticises with the utmost severity in his *poetics*, yet he plainly enough confesses to have carried the style of tragedy to its full height and dignity. For as to the reformation which that poet made in the use of the *sublime* and *figurative* speech, in general; see what our discerning author says in his *rhethorics*; where he strives to show the impertinence and nauseousness of the florid speakers, and such as understood not the use of the *simple* and *natural* manner. "The just masters "and right managers of the poetic or high style should learn," says he, "how to conceal the manner as much as possible." Διὸ δεῖ λανθάνειν ποιῶντας, ἢ μὴ δοκεῖν λέγειν πεπλασμένως, ἀλλὰ πεφυκότως· τῷτο γὰρ πιθανόν, ἐκεῖνο δὲ, τὸναντίον. Ὡς γὰρ πρὸς ἐπιβυλεύοντα διαβάλλονται, καθάπερ πρὸς τὰς οἴνας τὰς μεμιγμένας. Καὶ οἶον ἢ Θεοδώρου Φωνὴ πέπονθε πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ὑποκριτῶν· ἢ μὲν γὰρ τῷ λέγοντος ἔοικεν εἶναι, αἱ δ' ἄλλοις κλέπεται δ' εὔ, εἴαν τις ἐκ τῆς ἐιωθυίας διαλέκτου ἐκλέγων συνιθῇ· ὅπερ ἘΥΡΙΠΙΔΗΣ ποιεῖ, ἢ ὑπέδειξε πρῶτος. *Rhet. lib. 3. cap. 2.*



Comedy, it seems, it was still in hand. It had been already in some manner reduced: but as he plainly insinuates, it lay yet unfinished; notwithstanding the witty labors of an Aristophanes, and the other comic poets of the first manner, who had flourished a whole age before this critic. As perfect as were those wits in style and language, and as fertile in all the varieties and turns of humor; yet the truth of characters, the beauty of order, and the simple imitation of nature, were in a manner wholly unknown to them; or through petulancy, or debauch of humor, were, it seems, neglected and set aside. A Menander had not as yet appeared; who arose soon after, to accomplish the prophecy of our grand master of art, and consummate philologist.

Comedy<sup>8</sup> had at this time done little more than what the ancient parodies<sup>9</sup> had done before it. It was of admirable use to explode the false sublime of early poets, and such as, in its own

<sup>8</sup> Ὡς περ δὲ καὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα μάλιστα ποιητῆς Ὀμηρος ἦν (μόνος γὰρ ἔχ' ὅτι εὖ, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ μιμήσεις δραματικὰς ἐποίησε) ἔτω καὶ τὰ τῆς κωμωδίας σχήματα πρῶτος ὑπέδειξεν. Arist. poet. cap. 4. No wonder, if, in this descent, comedy came late. See below, p. 241. in the notes; and above, p. 170.

<sup>9</sup> The Parodies were very ancient; but they were in reality no other than mere *burlesque* or *farce*. Comedy, which borrowed something from those humors, as well as from the *Phallica* below-mentioned, was not, however, raised to any form or shape of art (as said above), till about the time of *Aristophanes*, who was of the *first* model, and a beginner of the kind; at the same time that Tragedy had undergone all its changes, and was already come to its last perfection; as the grand critic has shown us, and as our other authorities plainly evince.



age, were on every occasion ready to relapse into that vicious manner. The good tragedians themselves could hardly escape its lashes. The pompous orators were its never-failing subjects. Every thing which might be imposing, by a false gravity or solemnity, was forced to endure the trial of this touchstone. Manners and characters, as well as speech and writings, were discussed with the greatest freedom. Nothing could be better fitted than this genius of wit, to unmask the face of things, and remove those larvæ naturally formed from the tragic manner, and pompous style, which had preceded.

<sup>10</sup> *Et docuit magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno.  
Successit vetus his comædia. —*

It was not by chance that this succession

<sup>10</sup> *Hor. de arte poet.* The immediate preceding verses of *Horace*, after his having spoken of the first tragedy under *Thespis*, are,

*Post hunc personæ pallæque repertor honestæ  
Æschylus, et modicis instravit pulpitu tignis,  
Et docuit, &c.*

Before the time of *Thespis*, tragedy indeed was said to be, as *Horace* calls it here, (in a concise way) *ignotum genus*. It lay in a kind of chaos intermixed with other kinds, and hardly distinguishable by its gravity and pomp from the humors which gave rise afterwards to comedy. But, in a strict historical sense, as we find *Plato* speaking in his *Minos*, tragedy was of ancient date, and even of the very ancientest with the *Athenians*. His words are, 'Η δέ τραγωδία ἐστὶ παλαιὸν ἐνθάδε, ἔχ, ὡς οἴονται, ἀπὸ Θεσπιδος ἀρξαμένη, ἧδ' ἀπὸ Φρυγίχης. Ἀλλ' εἰ θέλεις ἐννοῆσαι, πάντῃ παλαιὸν αὐτὸ ἐυρήσεις ἐν τῇσδε τῇ πόλει ἔνθημα.



happened in Greece, after the manner described; but rather through necessity, and from the reason and nature of things <sup>11</sup>. For in healthy bodies, nature dictates remedies of her own, and provides for the cure of what has happened amiss in the growth and progress of a constitution. The affairs of this free people being in the increase; and their ability and judgment every day improving, as letters and arts advanced; they would, of course, find in themselves a strength of nature, which, by the help of good ferments, and a wholesome opposition of humors, would correct in one way whatever was excessive, or peccant (as physicians say) in another. Thus the florid and over-sanguine humor of the high style, was allayed by something of a contrary nature. The comic genius was applied, as a kind of caustic, to those exuberances and funguses of the swollen dialect, and magnificent manner of speech. But after a while, even this remedy itself was found to turn into a disease; as medicines, we know, grow corrosive, when the fouler matters on which they wrought are sufficiently purged, and the obstructions removed.

<sup>12</sup> — — — *In vitium libertas excidit, et vim  
Dignam lege regi — — —* <sup>13</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Of this subject see more in vol. 3. misc. 3. chap. 1. parag 7.

<sup>12</sup> Hor. de arte poet.

<sup>13</sup> It follows. ——— *Lex est accepta, chorusque  
Turpiter obticuit, sublato jure nocendi.*



It is a great error to suppose, as some have done, that the restraining this licentious manner of wit by law, was a violation of the liberty of the Athenian state, or an effect merely of the power of foreigners; whom it little concerned, after what manner those citizens treated one another in their comedies, or what sort of wit or humor they made choice of for their ordinary diversions. If upon a change of government, as during the usurpation of the Thirty, or when that nation was humbled at any time, either by a Philip, an Alexander, or an Antipater, they had been forced against their wills, to enact such laws as these; it is certain they would have soon repealed them, when those terrors were removed, (as they soon were), and the people restored to their former liberties. For, notwithstanding what this nation suffered outwardly, by several shocks received from foreign states; notwithstanding the dominion and power they lost abroad, they preserved the same government at home. And how passionately interested they were in what concerned their diversions and public spectacles; how jealous and full of emulation in what related to their poetry, wit, music, and other arts, in which they excelled all other nations; is well known to persons who have any comprehension of ancient manners, or been the least conversant in history.

Nothing therefore could have been the cause of these public decrees, and of this gradual reform in the commonwealth of wit, beside the



real reform of taste and humor in the commonwealth or government itself. Instead of any abridgment, it was in reality an increase of liberty, an enlargement of the security of property, and an advancement of private ease and personal safety, to provide against what was injurious to the good name and reputation of every citizen. As this intelligence in life and manners grew greater in that experienced people, so the relish of wit and humor would naturally in proportion be more refined. Thus Greece in general grew more and more polite; and as it advanced in this respect, was more averse to the obscene buffooning manner. The Athenians still went before the rest, and led the way in elegance of every kind. For even their first comedy was a refinement upon some irregular attempts which had been made in that dramatic way. And the grand critic shows us<sup>14</sup>, that in his own time the Phallica, or scurrilous and obscene farce, prevailed still, and had the countenance of the magistrate, in some cities of Greece, who were behind the rest in this reform of taste and manners.

But what is yet a more undeniable evidence of this natural and gradual refinement of styles and manners among the ancients, particularly in what concerned their stage, is, that this very case of

<sup>14</sup> Lib. de poet. cap. 4. de tragœdia et comœdia, scilicet, Καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξαρχόντων τὸν διθυράμβον, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τῶν θαλλικῶν, αἳ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐν πολλαῖς τῶν πόλεων διαμένει νομιζόμενα, κατὰ μικρὸν ἡυξήθη, etc.



prohibition and restraint happened among the Romans themselves; where no effects of foreign power, or of a home-tyranny, can be pretended. Their Fescennin, and Atellan way of wit, was in early days prohibited, and laws made against it, for the public's sake, and in regard to the welfare of the community; such licentiousness having been found in reality contrary to the just liberty of the people.

<sup>15</sup> — — — — *Doluerē cruento*

*Dente laceffiti: fuit intactis quoque cura*

*Conditione super Communi. Quin etiam lex*

*Pœnaque lata malo quæ nollet carmine quemquam*

*Describi. — — — —*

In defence of what I have here advanced, I could, besides the authority of grave historians<sup>16</sup>, and chronologists, produce the testimony of one of the wisest and most serious of ancient authors;

<sup>15</sup> Hor. epist. i. lib. 2.

<sup>16</sup> To confirm what is said of this natural succession of wit and style, according to the several authorities above-cited in the immediate preceding notes, see Strabo, lib. i. Ὡς δ' εἰπεῖν, ὁ πιζὼς λόγος ὄντι κατεσκευασμένος, μίσημα τῷ ποιητικῷ ἐστὶ. πρῶτισα γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ καλῶσκειυὴ παρῆλθεν εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εὐδοκίμησεν. Ἐἴλας ἐκείνην μιμνέμενοι, λύσαντες τὸ μέτρον, τ' ἄλλα δὲ φυλάξαντες τὰ ποιητικὰ, συνέγραψαν οἱ περὶ Κάδμον, καὶ Φερεκύδην, καὶ Ἑκαταῖον· εἴλας οἱ ὕπερον, ἀφαιρέντες αἰεὶ τι τῶν τοιούτων, εἰς τὸ νῦν εἶδος κατήγαγον, ὡς ἂν ἀπὸ ὕψους τινός. Καθάπερ ἂν τις καὶ τὴν κωμῳδίαν φαίη λαβεῖν τὴν σύστασιν ἀπὸ τῆς τραγῳδίας, καὶ τῷ κατ' αὐτὴν ὕψει, καλῶσκειυὴ εἰς τὸ λογιεῖσθαι νυνὶ καλῶμενον.



whose single authority would be acknowledged to have equal force with that of many concurring writers. He shows us, that this first-formed comedy and scheme of ludicrous wit, was introduced upon the neck of the sublime<sup>17</sup>. The familiar airy muse was privileged as a sort of counter pedagogue, against the pomp and formality of the more solemn writers. And what is highly remarkable, our author shows us, that, in philosophy itself, there happened, almost at the very same time, a like succession of wit and humor; when, in opposition to the sublime philosopher, and afterwards to his grave disciple and successor in the academy<sup>18</sup>, there arose a comic philosophy, in the person of another master and other disciples; who personally, as well as in their writings, were set in direct opposition to the former; not as differing in opinions or maxims,

<sup>17</sup> Πρῶτον αἱ τραγωδίαὶ παρήχθησαν ὑπομνησικαὶ τῶν συμβαινόντων, καὶ ὅτι ταῦτα ἔλω πέφυκε γίνεσθαι, καὶ ὅτι οἷς ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς ψυχαγωγῆσθε, τέλοις μὴ ἄχθεσθε ἐπὶ τῆς μείζονος σκηνῆς. \* \* \* \* Μετὰ δὲ τὴν τραγωδίαν ἡ ἀρχαία κωμῳδία παρήχθη, παιδαγωγικὴν παρρησίαν ἔχουσα, καὶ τῆς ἀτυφίας ἐκ ἀκρήτως, δι' αὐτῆς τῆς εὐθυρρημοσύνης ὑπομνηστικῶς πρὸς οἷόν τι καὶ Διογένης ταυτὶ παρελάμβαιε· μετὰ ταῦτα τις ἡ μέση κωμῳδία, καὶ λοιπὸν ἡ νέα, &c. Μαρ. Αντ βιβ. ια.

Ὅπως δὲ παρ' ὅλον τὸν βίον ποιεῖν, καὶ ὅπως λίαν ἀξιοπιστότατα πράγματα φαντάζεται, ἀπογυμνῶν αὐτὰ, καὶ τὴν εὐτέλειαν αὐτῶν καθορᾶν καὶ τὴν ἰστορίαν, ὑφ' ἣ σερμύνεται, περιαιρεῖν· δεινὸς γὰρ ὁ τύφος παραλογισμῆς. Καὶ ὅτε δοκῆις μάλιστα περὶ τὰ σπουδαῖα καταγίνεσθαι, τότε μάλιστα καταγοητεύει· ὅρα γὰρ ὁ Κράτης, τί περὶ αὐτῆς τῆς Ξενοκράτης λέγει. Id. βιβ. ε.

<sup>18</sup> See the citations immediately preceding.



but in their style and manner; in the turn of humor, and method of instruction<sup>19</sup>.

It is pleasant enough to consider how exact the resemblance was between the lineage of philosophy and that of poetry, as derived from their two chief founders or patriarchs, in whose loins the several races lay as it were inclosed. For as the grand poetic Sire<sup>20</sup> was, by the consent of all antiquity, allowed to have furnished subjects both to the tragic, the comic, and every other kind of genuine poetry; so the philosophical Patriarch, in the same manner, containing within himself the several geniuses of philosophy, gave rise to all those several manners in which that science was delivered.

His disciple of noble birth and lofty genius, who aspired to poetry and rhetoric, took the sublime part, and shone above his other condisciples<sup>21</sup>. He of mean birth, and poorest cir-

<sup>19</sup> *Tunicâ distantia* ——— Juv. sat. 13. ver. 222.

<sup>20</sup> See above, pag. 212. in the notes. According to this Homerical lineage of poetry, comedy would naturally prove the drama of latest birth. For though Aristotle, in the same place, cites Homer's *Margites* as analogous to comedy, yet the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, in which the heroic style prevails, having been ever highest in esteem, were likeliest to be first wrought and cultivated.

<sup>21</sup> His dialogues were real Poems, (as has been shown above, pag. 167. &c.) This may easily be collected from the *poetics* of the grand master. We may add what is cited by *Athenæus* from another treatise of that author. Ὁ τῆς ἄλλης ἀπαξ ἀπλῶς κακολεχέσας, ἐν μὲν τῇ πολιτείᾳ Ὅμηρον ἐκβάλλων, καὶ τὴν μιμητικὴν ποίησιν, αὐτὸς δὲ [Πλάτων] τὰς διαλόγους μιμητικῶς γράψας, ὧν τῆς ἰδέας ἔδ' αὐτὸς εὐρεῖν ἔστιν. Πρὸ γὰρ αὐτῆς τῆς



cumstances, whose constitution as well as condition inclined him most to the way we call satiric, took the reproofing part; which, in his better-humored and more agreeable successor, turned into the comic kind, and went upon the model of that ancient comedy which was then prevalent<sup>22</sup>. But another noble disciple, whose genius was towards action, and who proved afterwards the greatest hero of his time, took the genteeler part, and softer manner. He joined what was deepest and most solid in philosophy with what was easiest and most refined in breeding, and in the character and manner of a gentleman. Nothing could be remoter than his genius was from the scholastic, the rhetorical, or mere poetic kind. He was as distant, on one hand, from the sonorous, high, and pompous strain, as, on the other hand, from the ludicrous, mimical, or satiric.

This was that natural and simple genius of antiquity, comprehended by so few, and so little relished by the vulgar<sup>23</sup>. This was that philosophical Menander of earlier time, whose works one may wonder to see preserved from the same

εὖρε τὸ εἶδος τῶν λόγων ὁ Τήιος Ἀλεξάνδριος, ὡς Νικίας ὁ Νικαιεὺς ἔσπευε καὶ Σωτηρίων. Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ ἐν τῷ περὶ ποιητῶν ἔτι γράφει· “Οὐκ ἔν ἐμοῖς τὰς καλὰς Μίμους, μὴ φῶμεν εἶναι λόγους καὶ μιμήσεις, ἢ τὰς Ἀλεξάνδρου τῆς Τήιος τὰς πρώτας γραφέντας τῶν Σαυκρατικῶν διαλόγων;” Ἀντικρὺς φάσκων ὁ πολυμαθέστατος Ἀριστοτέλης πρὸ Πλάτωνος διαλόγους γέγραφαί τὸν Ἀλεξάνδριον. Athen. lib. II.

<sup>22</sup> According to the two last citations, pag. 217 et 218.

<sup>23</sup> Vol. 3. misc. 5. chap. I. parag. 25.



fate: since, in the darker ages through which they passed, they might probably be alike neglected, on the account of their like simplicity of style and composition.

There is, besides the several manners of writing above-described, another of considerable authority and weight, which had its rise chiefly from the critical art itself, and from the more accurate inspection into the works of preceding masters. The grand critic, of whom we have already spoken, was a chief and leader in this order of penmen. For though the Sophists of elder times had treated many subjects methodically, and in form; yet this writer was the first who gained repute in the methodic kind. As the talent of this great man was more towards polite learning, and the arts, than towards the deep and solid parts of philosophy, it happened, that in his school there was more care taken of other sciences, than of ethics, dialect, or logic; which provinces were chiefly cultivated by the successors of the academy and porch.

It has been observed of this methodic or scholastic manner, that it naturally befitted an author, who, though endowed with a comprehensive and strong genius, was not in himself of a refined temper, blessed by the graces, or favored by any muse; one who was not of a fruitful imagination, but rather dry and rigid; yet withal acute and piercing, accurate and distinct. For the chief nerve and finew of this style consists in the clear division and partition of the subjects.



Though there is nothing exalting in the manner, it is naturally powerful and commanding; and, more than any other, subdues the mind, and strengthens its determinations. It is from this genius that firm conclusions and steady maxims are best formed: which, if solidly built, and on sure ground, are the shortest and best guides towards wisdom and ability, in every kind; but if defective, or unsound in the least part, must of necessity lead us to the grossest absurdities, and stiffest pedantry and conceit.

Now, though every other style, and genuine manner of composition, has its order and method, as well as this, which, in a peculiar sense, we call the methodic; yet it is this manner alone which professes method, dissects itself in parts, and makes its own anatomy. The sublime can no way condescend thus, or bear to be suspended in its impetuous course. The comic, or derisory manner, is further still from making show of method. It is then, if ever, that it presumes to give itself this wise air, when its design is to expose the thing itself, and ridicule the formality and sophistry so often sheltered beneath it. The simple manner, which being the strictest imitation of nature, should of right be the completest, in the distribution of its parts, and symmetry of its whole, is yet so far from making any ostentation of method, that it conceals the artifice as much as possible; endeavouring only to express the effect of art, under the appearance of the greatest ease and negligence. And even when it assumes the censoring or reproving part, it does it in the most concealed and gentle way.



The authors indeed of our age are as little capable of receiving as of giving advice, in such a way as this: so little is the general palate formed as yet to a taste of real Simplicity. As for the Sublime, though it be often the subject of criticism, it can never be the manner, or afford the means. The way of form and Method, the didactic or perceptive manner, as it has been usually practised amongst us, and as our ears have been long accustomed, has so little force towards the winning our attention, that it is apter to tire us than the metre of an old ballad. We no sooner hear the theme propounded, the subject divided and subdivided, (with first of the first, and so forth, as order requires), but instantly we begin a strife with nature, who otherwise might surprise us in the soft fetters of sleep, to the great disgrace of the orator, and scandal of the audience. The only manner left in which criticism can have its just force amongst us, is the ancient Comic; of which kind were the first Roman miscellanies, or satiric pieces: a sort of original writing of their own, refined afterwards by the best genius, and politest poet of that nation; who, notwithstanding, owns the manner to have been taken from the Greek comedy above-mentioned. And if our home-wits would refine upon this pattern, they might perhaps meet with considerable success.

In effect, we may observe, that, in our own nation, the most successful criticism, or method of refutation, is that which borders most on the manner of the earliest Greek comedy. The highly-



rated burlesque poem, written on the subject of our religious controversies in the last age, is a sufficient token of this kind<sup>24</sup>. And that justly admired piece of comic wit<sup>25</sup>, given us some time after by an author of the highest quality, has furnished our best wits in all their controversies, even in religion and politics, as well as in the affairs of wit and learning, with the most effectual and entertaining method of exposing folly, pedantry, false reason, and ill writing. And without some such tolerated manner of criticism as this, how grossly we might have been imposed on, and should continue to be, for the future, by many pieces of dogmatical rhetoric, and pedantic wit, may easily be apprehended by those who know any thing of the state of letters in our nation, or are in the least fitted to judge of the manner of the common poets, or formal authors of the times.

In what form of manner soever criticism may appear amongst us, or critics chuse to exert their talent, it can become none, besides the grossly superstitious or ignorant, to be alarmed at this spirit. For if it be ill managed, and with little wit, it will be destroyed by something wittier in the kind; if it be witty itself, it must of necessity advance wit.

And thus, from the consideration of ancient as

<sup>24</sup> *Hudibras*.

<sup>25</sup> *The Rehearsal*. See vol. 3. misc. 5. ch. 2. parag. 11. in the notes, and parag. 14.



well as modern time, it appears, that the cause and interest of Critics is the same with that of wit, learning, and good sense.

### S E C T. III.

**T**HUS we have surveyed the state of authors, as they are influenced from without; either, by the frowns or favor of the great, or by the applause or censure of the critics. It remains only to consider, how the People, or world in general, stand affected towards our modern penmen; and what occasion these adventurers may have of complaint or boast, from their encounter with the Public.

There is nothing more certain, than that a real genius, and thorough artist, in whatever kind, can never, without the greatest unwillingness and shame, be induced to act below his character, and, for mere interest, be prevailed with to prostitute his art or science, by performing contrary to its known rules. Whoever has heard any thing of the lives of famous statuaries, architects, or painters, will call to mind many instances of this nature. Or whoever has made any acquaintance with the better sort of mechanics, such as are real lovers of their art, and masters in it, must have observed their natural fidelity in this respect. Be they ever so idle, dis-



solite, or debauched; how regardless soever of other rules; they abhor any transgression in their art, and would chuse to lose customers and starve, rather than, by a base compliance with the World, to act contrary to what they call the justness and truth of work.

“Sir,” says a poor fellow of this kind to his rich customer, “you are mistaken in coming to me for such a piece of workmanship. Let who will make it for you, as you fancy, I know it to be wrong. Whatever I have made hitherto, has been true work: and, neither for your sake, or any body’s else, shall I put my hand to any other.”

This is virtue! real virtue, and love of truth; independent of opinion, and above the World. This disposition transferred to the whole of life, perfects a character, and makes that probity and worth which the learned are often at such a loss to explain. For is there not a workmanship and a truth in Actions? Or, is the workmanship of this kind less becoming, or less worthy our notice, that we should not in this case be as furly at least as the honest artisan, who has no other philosophy than what nature and his trade have taught him?

When one considers this zeal and honesty of inferior artists, one would wonder to see those who pretend to skill and science in a higher kind, have so little regard to truth, and the perfection of their art. One would expect it of our writers, that if they had real ability, they should



draw the World to them and not meanly suit themselves to the world, in its weak state. We may justly indeed make allowances for the simplicity of those early geniuses of our nation, who, after so many barbarous ages, when letters lay yet in their ruins, made bold excursions into a vacant field, to seize the posts of honor, and attain the stations which were yet unpossessed by the wits of their own country. But since the age is now so far advanced; learning established; the rules of writing stated; and the truth of art so well apprehended, and every where confessed and owned: it is strange to see our writers as unshapen still and monstrous in their works as heretofore. There can be nothing more ridiculous, than to hear our Poets, in their prefaces, talk of art and structure; whilst in their pieces they perform as ill as ever, and with as little regard to those professed rules of art, as the honest Bards, their predecessors, who had never heard of any such rules, or at least had never owned their justice or validity.

Had the early poets of Greece thus complimented their nation, by complying with its first relish and appetite, they had not done their countrymen such service, nor themselves such honor, as we find they did, by conforming to truth and nature. The generous spirits who first essayed the way, had not always the World on their side; but soon drew after them the best judgments, and soon afterwards the World itself. They forced their way into it, and by weight of



merit turned its judgment on their side. They formed their audience; polished the age; refined the public ear, and framed it right; that in return they might be rightly and lastingly applauded. Nor were they disappointed in their hope. The applause soon came, and was lasting; for it was sound. They have justice done them at this day. They have survived their nation; and live, though in a dead language. The more the age is enlightened, the more they shine. Their fame must necessarily last as long as letters, and posterity will ever own their merit.

Our modern authors, on the contrary, are turned and modelled (as themselves confess) by the public relish, and current humor of the times. They regulate themselves by the irregular fancy of the world; and frankly own they are preposterous and absurd, in order to accommodate themselves to the genius of the age. In our days, the audience makes the poet, and the bookseller the author: with what profit to the public, or what prospect of lasting fame and honor to the writer, let any one who has judgment imagine.

But though our writers charge their faults thus freely on the Public, it will, I doubt, appear from many instances, that this practice is mere imposture; since those absurdities, which they are the aptest to commit, are far from being delightful or entertaining. We are glad to take up with what our language can afford us; and, by a sort of emulation with other nations, are forced



to cry up such writers of our own as may best serve us for comparison. But when we are out of this spirit, it must be owned, we are not apt to discover any great fondness or admiration of our authors. Nor have we any, whom by mutual consent we make to be our standard. We go to plays, as to other shows; and frequent the theatre, as the booth. We read epics and dramatics, as we do satires and lampoons. For we must of necessity know what wit, as well as what scandal, is stirring. Read we must, let writers be ever so indifferent. And this perhaps may be some occasion of the laziness and negligence of our authors; who, observing this need which our curiosity brings on us, and making an exact calculation in the way of trade, to know justly the quality and quantity of the public demand, feed us thus from hand to mouth; resolving not to overstock the market, or be at the pains of more correctness or wit than is absolutely necessary to carry on the traffic.

Our Satire therefore is scurrilous, buffooning, and without morals or instruction, which is the majesty and life of this kind of writing. Our Encomium or Panegyric is as fulsome and displeasing, by its prostitute and abandoned manner of praise. The worthy persons who are the subjects of it, may well be esteemed sufferers by the manner. And the public, whether it will or no, is forced to make untoward reflections, when led to it by such satirising panegyrists. For in reality the nerve and sinew of modern panegyric lies in a dull kind



of satire; which the author, it is true, intends should turn to the advantage of his subject; but which, if I mistake not, will appear to have a very contrary effect.

The usual method which our authors take, when they would commend either a brother-author, a wit, a hero, a philosopher, or a statesman, is to look abroad, to find within the narrow compass of their learning, some eminent names of persons who answered to these characters in a former time. These they are sure to lash, as they imagine, with some sharp stroke of satire. And when they have stripped these reverend personages of all their share of merit, they think to clothe their hero with the spoils. Such is the sterility of these encomiasts! they know not how to praise, but by detraction. If a fair-one is to be celebrated, Helen must in comparison be deformed; Venus herself degraded. That a modern may be honored, some ancient must be sacrificed. If a poet is to be extolled, down with a Homer or a Pindar. If an orator, or philosopher; down with Demosthenes, Tully, Plato. If a general of our army, down with any hero whatever of time past. "The Romans knew no discipline! the Grecians never learned the art of war!"

Were there an art of writing to be formed upon the modern practice, this method we have described might perhaps be styled the rule of dispatch, or the Herculean law; by which encomiasts, with no other weapon than their single club, may silence all other fame, and place their



hero in the vacant throne of honor. I would willingly, however, advise these celebrators to be a little more moderate in the use of this club-method. Not that I pretend to ask quarter for the ancients. But for the sake merely of those moderns, whom our panegyrists undertake to praise, I would wish them to be a little cautious of comparing characters. There is no need to call up a Publicola, or a Scipio, an Aristides, or a Cato, to serve as foils. These were patriots and good generals in their time, and did their country honest service. No offence to any who at present do the same. The Fabriciuses, the Æmiliuses, the Cincinnatuses, (poor men!) may be suffered to rest quietly: or if their ghosts should, by this unlucky kind of enchantment, be raised in mockery and contempt, they may perhaps prove troublesome in earnest, and cast such reflections on our panegyrists, and their modern patrons, as may be no way for the advantage of either. The well-deserving ancients will have always a strong party among the wise and learned of every age. And the memory of foreign worthies, as well as those of our own nation, will with gratitude be cherished by the nobler spirits of mankind. The interest of the dead is not so disregarded, but that, in case of violence offered them, through partiality to the living, there are hands ready prepared to make sufficient reprisals.

It was in times when flattery grew much in fashion, that the title of panegyric was appropriated to such pieces as contained only a profuse



and unlimited praise of some single person. The ancient panegyrics were no other than merely such writings as authors of every kind recited at the solemn assemblies of the people. They were the exercises of the wits, and men of letters, who, as well as the men of bodily dexterity, bore their part at the Olympic, and other national and panegyric games.

The British nation, though they have nothing of this kind ordained or established by their laws, are yet by nature wonderfully inclined to the same panegyric exercises. At their fairs, and during the time of public festivals, they perform their rude Olympics, and show an activity and address beyond any other modern people whatever. Their trials of skill, it is true, are wholly of the body, not of the brain. Nor is it to be wondered at, if, being left to themselves, and no way assisted by the laws or magistrate, their bodily exercises retain something of the barbarian character, or at least show their manners<sup>1</sup> to hold more of

<sup>1</sup> Whoever has a thorough *taste* of the wit and manner of *Horace*, if he only compares his epistle to *Augustus*, (*lib. 2.*), with the secret character of that prince from *Suetonius* and other authors, will easily find what judgment that poet made of the *Roman taste*, even in the person of this sovereign and admired *Roman prince*, whose natural love of amphitheatrical spectacles, and other entertainments, (little accommodated to the interest of the *muses*), is there sufficiently insinuated. The prince indeed was (as it is said above, *p. 190.*) obliged in the highest degree to his poetical and witty friends, for guiding his taste, and forming his manners; as they really did, with good effect, and great advantage to his interest. Witness what even that flattering



Rome<sup>2</sup> than Greece. The gladiatorian, and other sanguinary sports, which we allow our people, discover sufficiently our national taste. And the baitings and slaughter of so many sorts of creatures, tame as well as wild, for diversion merely, may witness the extraordinary inclination we have for amphitheatrical spectacles.

I know not whether it be from this killing disposition remarked in us, that our satirists prove such very slaughter-men; and even our panegyric authors, or encomiasts, delight so much in the dispatching method above-described: but sure I am, that our<sup>3</sup> dramatic poets stand violently affected this way; and delight to make havock and destruction of every kind.

It is alledged indeed by our stage-poets, in ex-

court-historian, *Dion*, relates of the frank treatment which that prince received from his friend *Mæcenas*, who was forced to draw him from his bloody tribunal, and murderous delight, with the reproach of *Surge verò tandem, carnifex?* But *Horace*, according to his character and circumstances, was obliged to take a finer and more concealed manner, both with the prince and favorite.

*Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico*

*Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit.* Perf. sat. 1.

See vol. 3. misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 26. in the notes.

<sup>2</sup> We may add to this note what *Tacitus* or *Quintilian* remarks on the subject of the Roman taste: *Jam vero propria et peculiaria hujus urbis vitia pene in utero matris concipi mihi videntur, histrionalis favor, et gladiatorum equorumque studia: quibus occupatus et obsessus animus quantulum loci bonis artibus relinquit?* Dial. de oratoribus, cap. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. 3. misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 36.



cuse for vile ribaldry and other gross irregularities, both in the fable and language of their pieces, that their success, which depends chiefly on the ladies, is never so fortunate, as when this havock is made on virtue and good sense, and their pieces are exhibited publicly in this monstrous form. I know not how they can answer it to the fair sex, to speak (as they pretend) experimentally, and with such nice distinction of their audience. How far this excuse may serve them in relation to the common amours and love-adventures, I will not take upon me to pronounce. But I must own I have often wondered to see our \* fighting plays become so much the entertainment of that tender sex.

They who have no help from learning to observe the wider periods or revolutions of human kind, the alterations which happen in manners, and the flux and reflux of politeness, wit, and art, are apt at every turn to make the present age their standard, and imagine nothing barbarous or savage, but what is contrary to the manners of their own time. The same pretended judges, had they flourished in our Britain at the time when Cæsar made his first descent, would have condemned, as a whimsical critic, the man who should have made bold to censure our deficiency of clothing, and laugh at the blue cheeks and party-colored skins which were then in fashion with our ancestors. Such must of necessity

\* Vol. 3. misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 36.



be the judgment of those who are only critics by fashion. But to a just naturalist or humanist, who knows the creature Man, and judges of his growth and improvement in society, it appears evidently, that we British men were as barbarous and uncivilized in respect of the Romans under a Cæsar, as the Romans themselves were in respect of the Grecians, when they invaded that nation under a Mummius.

The noble wits of a court-education, who can go no further back into antiquity than their pedigree will carry them, are able, however, to call to mind the different state of manners in some few reigns past, when chivalry was in such repute. The ladies were then spectators not only of feigned combats and martial exercises, but of real duels and bloody feats of arms. They sat as umpires and judges of the doughty frays. These were the saint-protectors, to whom the champions chiefly paid their vows, and to whom they recommended themselves by these gallant quarrels, and elegant decisions of right and justice. Nor is this spirit so entirely lost amongst us, but that even at this hour the fair sex inspire us still with the fancy of like gallantries. They are the chief subject of many such civil turmoils, and remain still the secret influencing constellation by which we are engaged to give and ask that satisfaction which is peculiar to the fine gentlemen of the age. For thus a certain gallant of our court expressed the case very naturally, when being asked by his friends, why one of his established charac-



ter for courage and good sense, would answer the challenge of a coxcomb; he confessed, "that  
 " for his own sex, he could safely trust their  
 " judgment: but how should he appear at night  
 " before the maids of honor?"

Such is the different genius of nations; and of the same nation in different times and seasons. For so among the ancients, some have been known tender of the sex to such a degree, as not to suffer them to expose their modesty, by the view of masculine games, or theatrical representations of any kind whatever. Others, on the contrary,

<sup>5</sup> *Contra ea, pleraque nostris moribus sunt decora, quæ apud illos turpia putantur. Quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in convivium? Aut cujus materfamilias non primum locum tenet ædium, atque in celebritate versatur? quod multo fit aliter in Græcia. Nam neque in convivium adhibetur, nisi propinquorum; neque sedet, nisi in interiore parte ædium, quæ gynæconitis appellatur: quo nemo accedit, nisi propinqua cognatione conjunctus. Corn. Nep. in præfat. See also Ælian, cap. 1. lib. 10. and the law in Pausanias, lib. 5. cap. 6. and the story of Ælian, better related, as to the circumstances. Hinc de saxo fæminas dejicere lex jubet, quæ ad Olympicos ludos penetrassæ deprehensæ fuerint, vel quæ omnino Alpheum transmiserint, quibus est eis interdictum diebus: non tamen deprehensam esse ullam perbibent præter unam Callipatiram, quam alii Pherenicem nominant. Hæc, viro mortuo, cum virili ornatu exercitationum se magistrum simulans, Pisidorum filium in certamen deduxit; jamque eo vincente sepimentum id quo magistros seclusos habent, transiluit veste amissa. Inde fæminam agnitam omni crimine liberarunt. Datum hoc ex judicum æquitate, patris, fratrum, et filii gloriæ; qui omnes ex Olympicis ludis victores abierant. Ex eo lege sancitum, ut nudati adessent ludis ipsi etiam magistri.*



have introduced them into their amphitheatres, and made them sharers in the cruellest spectacles.

But let our authors or poets complain ever so much of the genius of our people, it is evident we are not altogether so barbarous or Gothic as they pretend. We are naturally no ill soil; and have musical parts, which might be cultivated with great advantage, if these gentlemen would use the art of masters in their composition. They have power to work upon our better inclinations, and may know by certain tokens, that their audience is disposed to receive nobler subjects, and taste a better manner, than that which, through indulgence to themselves more than to the world, they are generally pleased to make their choice.

Besides some laudable attempts which have been made with tolerable success, of late years, towards a just manner of writing, both in the heroic and familiar style, we have older proofs of a right disposition in our people towards the moral and instructive way. Our old dramatic poet<sup>e</sup> may witness for our good ear and manly relish. Notwithstanding his natural rudeness, his unpolished style, his antiquated phrase and wit, his want of method and coherence, and his deficiency in almost all the graces and ornaments of this kind of writing; yet, by the justness of his moral, the aptness of many of his descriptions, and the plain and natural turn of several of his characters,

<sup>e</sup> *Shakespeare.*



he pleases his audience, and often gains their ear, without a single bribe from luxury or vice. That<sup>7</sup> piece of his, which appears to have most affected English hearts, and has perhaps been ofteneft acted of any which have come upon our stage, is almost one continued moral; a series of deep reflections, drawn from one mouth, upon the subject of one single accident and calamity, naturally fitted to move horror and compassion. It may be properly said of this play, if I mistake not, that it has only One character or principal part. It contains no adoration or flattery of the sex; no ranting at the gods; no blustering heroism; nor any thing of that curious mixture of the fierce and tender, which makes the hinge of modern tragedy, and nicely varies it between the points of love and honor.

Upon the whole: Since in the two great poetic stations, the epic and dramatic, we may observe the moral genius so naturally prevalent: since our<sup>8</sup> most approved heroic poem has neither the softness of language, nor the fashionable turn of wit; but merely solid thought, strong reasoning, noble passion, and a continued thread of moral doctrine, piety, and virtue, to recommend it; we may justly infer, that it is not so much the public ear, as the ill hand and vitious manner of our poets, which needs redress.

And thus, at last, we are returned to our old

<sup>7</sup> The tragedy of *Hamlet*.

<sup>8</sup> *Milton's paradise lost*.



article of Advice, that main preliminary of self-study and inward converse, which we have found so much wanting in the authors of our time. They should add the wisdom of the heart to the task and exercise of the brain, in order to bring proportion and beauty into their works. That their composition and vein of writing may be natural and free, they should settle matters, in the first place, with themselves. And having gained a mastery here, they may easily, with the help of their genius, and a right use of art, command their audience, and establish a good taste.

It is on themselves that all depends. We have considered their other subjects of excuse. We have acquitted the great Men, their presumptive patrons, whom we have left to their own discretion. We have proved the Critics not only an inoffensive, but highly useful race. And for the Audience, we have found it not so bad as might perhaps at first be apprehended.

It remains, that we pass sentence on our authors, after having precluded them their last refuge. Nor do we condemn them on their want of wit or fancy; but of judgment and correctness, which can only be attained by thorough diligence, study, and impartial censure of themselves. It is Manners which is wanting<sup>9</sup>. It is a due sentiment of Morals which alone can make us know-

<sup>9</sup> *Supra*, p. 179. and *infra*, part 3. § 3. parag. 9. & 22. in the notes; vol. 3. misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 23. &c. *ib.* chap. 2. parag. 6. and 14.



ing in order and proportion, and give us the just tone and measure of human passion.

So much the poet must necessarily borrow of the philosopher, as to be master of the common Topics of morality. He must at least be speciously honest, and in all appearance a friend to virtue throughout his poem. The good and wise will abate him nothing in this kind; and the people, though corrupt, are, in the main, best satisfied with this conduct.

— *Speciosa locis, morataque recte  
Fabula, nullius veneris, sine pondere et arte,  
Valdiùs oblectat populum, meliusque moratur,  
Quam versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.*

Hor. de arte poet.



## P A R T III.

## S E C T. I.

**I**T is esteemed the highest compliment which can be paid a writer, on the occasion of some new work he has made public, to tell him, "that he has undoubtedly surpassed himself." And indeed when one observes how well this compliment is received, one would imagine it to contain some wonderful hyperbole of praise. For, according to the strain of modern politeness, it is not an ordinary violation of truth, which can afford a tribute sufficient to answer any common degree of merit. Now, it is well known, that the gentlemen whose merit lies towards authorship, are unwilling to make the least abatement on the foot of this ceremonial. One would wonder therefore to find them so entirely satisfied with a form of praise; which in plain sense amounts to no more than a bare affirmative, "That they have in some manner differed from themselves, and are become somewhat worse or better than their common rate." For if the vilest writer grows viler than ordinary, or exceeds his natural pitch on either side, he is justly said to exceed, or go beyond himself.



We find in the same manner, that there is no expression more generally used in a way of compliment to great men and princes, than that plain one, which is so often verified, and may be safely pronounced for truth, on most occasions; "That they have acted like themselves, and suitably to their own genius and character." The compliment, it must be owned, sounds well. No one suspects it. For what person is there who in his imagination joins not something worthy and deserving with his true and native Self, as oft as he is referred to it, and made to consider, who he is? Such is the natural affection of all mankind towards moral beauty and perfection, that they never fail in making this presumption in behalf of themselves: "That by nature they have something estimable and worthy in respect of others of their kind; and that their genuine, true, and natural Self, is, as it ought to be, of real value in society, and justly honorable for the sake of its merit, and good qualities." They conclude therefore they have the height of praise allotted them, when they are assured by any one, that they have done nothing below themselves, or that, in some particular action, they have exceeded the ordinary tenor of their character.

Thus is every one convinced of the reality of a better Self, and of the cult or homage which is due to it. The misfortune is, we are seldom taught to comprehend this Self, by placing it in a distinct view from its representative or coun-



terfeit. In our holy religion, which, for the greatest part, is adapted to the very meanest capacities, it is not to be expected, that a speculation of this kind should be openly advanced. It is enough that we have hints given us of a nobler Self, than that which is commonly supposed the basis and foundation of our actions. Self-interest is there taken, as it is vulgarly conceived: though, on the other side, there are, in the most sacred characters<sup>1</sup>, examples given us of the highest contempt of all such interested views, of a willingness to suffer without recompence for the sake of others, and of a desire to part even with life and being itself, on account of what is generous and worthy. But in the same manner as the celestial phenomena are in the sacred volumes generally treated according to common imagination, and the then current system of astronomy and natural science; so the moral appearances are in many places preserved without alteration, according to vulgar prejudice, and the general conception of interest and self-good. Our real and genuine Self is sometimes supposed that ambitious one, which is fond of power and glory, sometimes that childish one which is taken with vain show, and is to be invited to obedience by promise of finer habitations, precious stones and metals, shining garments, crowns, and other such dazzling beauties,

<sup>1</sup> *Exod.* ch. xxxii. ver. 31, 32. &c. and *Rom.* ch. ix. ver. 1, 2, 3. &c.



by which another earth, or material city, is represented.

It must be owned, that even at that time, when a greater and purer light disclosed itself in the chosen nation, their natural gloominess appeared still<sup>2</sup>, by the great difficulty they had to know themselves, or learn their real interest, after such long tutorage and instruction from above. The simplicity of that people must certainly have been very great, when the best doctrine could not go down without a treat, and the best disciples had their heads so running upon their loaves, that they were apt to construe every divine saying in a belly-sense<sup>3</sup>, and thought nothing more self-constituent than that inferior receptacle. Their taste in morals could not fail of being suitable to this extraordinary estimation of themselves. No wonder, if the better and nobler Self was left as a mystery to a people, who, of all human kind, were the most grossly selfish, crooked, and perverse. So that it must necessarily be confessed, in honor of their divine legislators, patriots, and instructors, that they exceeded all others in goodness and generosity, since they could so truly love their nation and brethren, such as they were; and could have so generous and disinterested regards for those who were in themselves so fordidly interested and undeserving.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 24. and vol. 3. misc. 2. chap. 1. parag. 29. &c.  
*ib.* chap. 3. parag. 38. &c.

<sup>3</sup> *Matth.* chap. xvi. ver. 6, 7, 8. &c.



But whatever may be the proper effect or operation of religion, it is the known province of philosophy, to teach us ourselves, keep us the self-same persons, and so regulate our governing fancies, passions, and humors, as to make us comprehensible to ourselves, and knowable by other features than those of a bare countenance. For it is not certainly by virtue of our face merely, that *we* are ourselves. It is not *WE* who change, when our complexion or shape changes. But there is that which being wholly metamorphosed and converted, *WE* are thereby in reality transformed and lost.

Should an intimate friend of ours, who had endured many sicknesses, and run many ill adventures, while he travelled through the remotest parts of the east, and hottest countries of the south, return to us so altered in his whole outward figure, that, till we had for a time conversed with him, we could not know him again to be the same person; the matter would not seem so very strange, nor would our concern on this account be very great. But should a like face and figure of a friend return to us, with thoughts and humors of a strange and foreign turn, with passions, affections, and opinions, wholly different from any thing we had formerly known, we should say in earnest, and with the greatest amazement and concern, that this was another creature, and not the friend whom we once knew familiarly. Nor should we in reality attempt any renewal of acquaintance or correspondence with such a person,



though perhaps he might preserve in his memory the faint marks or tokens of former transactions which had passed between us.

When a revolution of this kind, though not so total, happens at any time in a character; when the passion or humor of a known person changes remarkably from what it once was, it is to philosophy we then appeal. It is either the want or weakness of this principle which is charged on the delinquent. And on this bottom it is, that we often challenge ourselves, when we find such variation in our manners; and observe, that it is not always the same Self, nor the same interest we have in view, but often a direct contrary one, which we serve still with the same passion and ardor. When, from a noted liberality, we change perhaps to as remarkable a parsimony; when, from indolence and love of rest, we plunge into business; or from a busy and severe character, abhorrent from the tender converse of the fair sex, we turn on a sudden to a contrary passion, and become amorous or uxorious: we acknowledge the weakness; and charging our defect on the general want of philosophy, we say, sighing, "that, indeed, we none of us truly know ourselves." And thus we recognize the authority and proper object of philosophy; so far at least, that though we pretend not to be complete philosophers, we confess, "that as we have more or less of this intelligence or comprehension of ourselves, we are accordingly more or less truly Men, and either more or less to be depended



“ on, in friendship, society, and the commerce  
“ of life.”

The fruits of this science are indeed the fairest imaginable; and, upon due trial, are found to be as well relished, and of as good favor with mankind. But when invited to the speculation, we turn our eyes on that which we suppose the tree, it is no wonder if we flight the gardener-ship, and think the manner of culture a very contemptible mystery. “Grapes”, it is said, “are not gathered from thorns, nor figs from thistles.” Now, if in the literate world there be any choking weed, any thing purely thorn or thistle, it is in all likelihood that very kind of plant which stands for philosophy in some famous schools\*. There can be nothing more ridiculous, than to expect that manners or understanding should sprout from such a stock. It pretends indeed some relation to manners, as being definitive of the natures, essences, and properties of spirits; and some relation to reason, as describing the shapes and forms of certain instruments employed in the reasoning art. But had the craftiest of men, for many ages together, been employed in finding out a method to confound reason, and degrade the understanding of mankind; they could not perhaps have succeeded better, than by the establishment of such a mock-science.

I knew once a notable enthusiast of the itine-

\* *Infra*, § 3. parag. 7. and the *Moralists*, part 1. § 1. parag. 6. &c. in vol. 2.



rant kind, who being upon a high spiritual adventure, in a country where prophetic missions are treated as no jest, was, as he told me, committed a close prisoner, and kept for several months where he saw no manner of light. In this banishment from letters and discourse, the man very wittily invented an amusement much to his purpose, and highly preservative both of health and humor. It may be thought perhaps, that, of all seasons or circumstances, here was one the most suitable to our oft-mentioned practice of Soliloquy; especially since the prisoner was one of those whom in this age we usually call philosophers, a successor of Paracelsus, and a master in the occult sciences. But as to moral science, or any thing relating to self-converse, he was a mere novice. To work therefore he went, after a different method. He tuned his natural pipes, not after the manner of a musician, to practise what was melodious and agreeable in sounds, but to fashion and form all sorts of articulate voices the most distinctly that was possible. This he performed, by strenuously exalting his voice, and essaying it in all the several dispositions and configurations of his throat and mouth. And thus bellowing, roaring, snarling, and otherwise variously exerting his organs of sound, he endeavoured to discover what letters of the alphabet could best design each species, or what new letters were to be invented, to mark the undiscovered modifications. He found for instance, the letter A to be a most genuine character, an original



and pure vowel, and justly placed as the principal in the front of the alphabetic order. For, having duly extended his under-jaw to its utmost distance from the upper, and, by a proper inflection of his fingers, provided against the contraction of either corner of his mouth, he experimentally discovered it impossible for human tongue, under these circumstances, to emit any other modification of sound than that which was described by this primitive character. The vowel O was formed by an orbicular disposition of the mouth; as was aptly delineated in the character itself. The vowel U, by a parallel protrusion of the lips. The other vowels and consonants, by other various collisions of the mouth, and operations of the active tongue upon the passive gum or palate. The result of this profound speculation and long exercise of our prisoner, was a philosophical treatise, which he composed when he was set at liberty. He esteemed himself the only master of voice and language, on the account of this his radical science, and fundamental knowledge of sounds. But whoever had taken him to improve their voice, or teach them an agreeable or just manner of accent or delivery, would, I believe, have found themselves considerably deluded.

It is not that I would condemn as useless this speculative science of articulation. It has its place, no doubt, among the other sciences, and may serve to grammar, as grammar serves to rhetoric, and to other arts of speech and writing. The solidity of mathematics, and its advantage to man.



kind, is proved by many effects in those beneficial arts and sciences which depend on it: though astrologers, horoscopers, and other such, are pleased to honor themselves with the title of mathematicians. As for metaphysics, and that which in the schools is taught for logic or for ethics; I shall willingly allow it to pass for philosophy, when, by any real effects, it is proved capable to refine our spirits, improve our understandings, or mend our manners. But if the defining material or immaterial substances, and distinguishing their properties and modes, is recommended to us as the right manner of proceeding in the discovery of our own natures, I shall be apt to suspect such a study as the more delusive and infatuating, on account of its magnificent pretension.

The study of triangles and circles interferes not with the study of minds. Nor does the student in the mean while suppose himself advancing in wisdom, or the knowledge of himself or mankind. All he desires is, to keep his head sound, as it was before. And well he thinks indeed he has come off, if, by good fortune, there be no crack made in it. As for other ability or improvement, in the knowledge of human nature or the world, he refers himself to other studies and practice. Such is the mathematician's modesty and good sense. But for the philosopher, who pretends to be wholly taken up in considering his higher faculties, and examining the powers and principles of his understanding, if, in reality, his philosophy be foreign to the matter professed,



if it goes beside the mark, and reaches nothing we can truly call our interest or concern, it must be somewhat worse than mere ignorance or idiotism. The most ingenious way of becoming foolish, is by a system. And the surest method to prevent good sense, is to set up something in the room of it. The liker any thing is to wisdom, if it be not plainly the thing itself, the more directly it becomes its opposite.

One would expect it of these physiologists and searchers of modes and substances, that, being so exalted in their understandings, and enriched with science above other men, they should be as much above them in their passions and sentiments. The consciousness of being admitted into the secret recesses of nature, and the inward resources of a human heart, should, one would think, create in these gentlemen a sort of magnanimity, which might distinguish them from the ordinary race of mortals. But if their pretended knowledge of the machine of this world, and of their own frame, is able to produce nothing beneficial either to the one or to the other; I know not to what purpose such a philosophy can serve, except only to shut the door against better knowledge, and introduce impertinence and conceit with the best countenance of authority.

It is hardly possible for a student, but more especially an author, who has dealt in ideas, and treated formally of the passions, in a way of natural philosophy, not to imagine himself more wise on this account, and more knowing in his



own character, and the genius of mankind. But that he is mistaken in his calculation, experience generally convinces us; none being found more impotent in themselves, of less command over their passions, less free from superstition and vain fears, or less safe from common imposture and delusion, than the noted head-pieces of this stamp. Nor is this a wonder. The speculation in a manner bespeaks the practice. There needs no formal deduction to make this evident. A small help from our familiar method of soliloquy may serve turn: and we may perhaps decide this matter in a more diverting way, by confronting this super-speculative philosophy with a more practical sort, which relates chiefly to our acquaintance, friendship, and good correspondence with ourselves.

On this account, it may not be to my reader's disadvantage, if, forgetting him for a while, I apply chiefly to myself; and, as occasion offers, assume that self-conversant practice which I have pretended to disclose. It is hoped, therefore, he will not esteem it as ill-breeding, if I lose the usual regard to his presence. And should I fall insensibly into one of the paroxysms described, and, as in a sort of phrenzy, enter into high expostulation with myself; he will not surely be offended with the free language, or even with the reproaches he hears from a person who only makes bold with whom he may.

If a passenger should turn by chance into a watchmaker's shop, and thinking to inform him-



self concerning watches, should inquire, of what metal, or what matter, each part was composed; what gave the colors, or what made the sounds; without examining what the real use was of such an instrument; or by what movements its end was best attained, and its perfection acquired: it is plain, that such an examiner as this would come short of any understanding in the real nature of the instrument. Should a philosopher, after the same manner, employing himself in the study of human nature, discover only, what effects each passion wrought upon the body; what change of aspect or feature they produced; and in what different manner they affected the limbs and muscles; this might possibly qualify him to give advice to an anatomist or a limner, but not to mankind, or to himself; since, according to this survey, he considered not the real operation or energy of his subject, nor contemplated the man, as real Man, and as a human agent; but as a watch or common machine.

“The passion of fear,” as a modern philosopher<sup>s</sup> informs me, “determines the spirits to the  
 “muscles of the knees, which are instantly ready  
 “to perform their motion, by taking up the legs  
 “with incomparable celerity, in order to remove  
 “the body out of harm’s way.” — Excellent mechanism! But whether the knocking together of the knees be any more the cowardly symptom of flight, than the chattering of the teeth is the

<sup>s</sup> Monsieur Des Cartes, in his treatise of the passions.



stout symptom of resistance, I shall not take upon me to determine. In this whole subject of inquiry, I shall find nothing of the least self-concernment. And I may depend upon it, that, by the most refined speculation of this kind, I shall neither learn to diminish my fears, or raise my courage. This, however, I may be assured of, that it is the nature of fear, as well as of other passions, to have its increase and decrease, as it is fed by opinion, and influenced by custom and practice.

These passions, according as they have the ascendancy in me, and differ in proportion with one another, affect my character, and make me different with respect to myself and others. I must, therefore, of necessity find redress and improvement in this case, by reflecting justly on the manner of my own motion, as guided by affections which depend so much on apprehension and conceit. By examining the various turns, inflections, declensions, and inward revolutions of the passions, I must undoubtedly come the better to understand a human breast, and judge the better both of others and myself. It is impossible to make the least advancement in such a study, without acquiring some advantage, from the regulation and government of those passions on which the conduct of a life depends.

For instance, if superstition be the sort of fear which most oppresses, it is not very material to inquire, on this occasion, to what parts or districts the blood or spirits are immediately detached, or



where they are made to rendezvous. For this no more imports me to understand, than it depends on me to regulate or change. But when the grounds of the superstitious fear are considered to be from opinion, and the subjects of it come to be thoroughly searched and examined: the passion itself must necessarily diminish, as I discover more and more the imposture which belongs to it.

In the same manner, if Vanity be from opinion, and I consider how vanity is conceived, from what imaginary advantages, and inconsiderable grounds; if I view it in its excessive height, as well as in its contrary depression; it is impossible I should not in some measure be relieved of this distemper.

*Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula —*

*Sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem*

*Possis, & magnam morbi deponere partem<sup>6</sup>.*

The same must happen in respect of anger, ambition, love, desire, and the other passions from whence I frame the different notion I have of interest. For as these passions veer, my interest veers, my steerage varies; and I make alternately, now this, now that, to be my course and harbour. The man in anger has a different happiness from the man in love. And the man lately become covetous, has a different notion of satisfaction from what he had before, when he was liberal. Even the man in humor has another

<sup>6</sup> *Hor. epist. 1. lib. 1.*



thought of interest and advantage than the man out of humor, or in the least disturbed. The examination, therefore, of my humors, and the Inquiry<sup>7</sup> after my passions, must necessarily draw along with it the search and scrutiny of my opinions, and the sincere consideration of my scope and end. And thus the study of human affection cannot fail of leading me towards the knowledge of human nature, and of myself.

This is the philosophy which, by nature, has the pre-eminence above all other science or knowledge. Nor can this surely be of the sort called vain or deceitful; since it is the only means by which I can discover vanity and deceit. This is not of that kind which depends on genealogies or traditions, and ministers questions and vain jangling<sup>8</sup>. It has not its name, as other philosophies, from the mere subtilty and nicety of the speculation; but, by way of excellence, from its being superior to all other speculations; from its presiding over all other sciences and occupations; teaching the measure of each, and assigning the just value of every thing in life. By this science religion itself is judged, spirits are searched, prophecies proved, miracles distinguished; the sole measure and standard being taken from moral rectitude, and from the discernment of what is sound and just in the

<sup>7</sup> See *Inquiry*, viz. treatise 4. in vol. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Coloss.* ch. ii. ver. 8. *Tit.* ch. iii. ver. 9. *1 Tim.* ch. i. ver. 4. and 6. and ch. vi. ver. 20.

affections.



affections. For if the ' tree is known only by its fruits, my first endeavour must be, to distinguish the true taste of fruits, refine my palate, and establish a just relish in the kind. So that to bid me judge authority by morals, whilst the rule of morals is supposed dependent on mere authority and will<sup>9</sup>, is the same in reality as to bid me see with my eyes shut, measure without a standard, and count without arithmetic.

And thus Philosophy, which judges both of herself, and of every thing besides, discovers her own province and chief command; teaches me to distinguish between her person and her likeness; and shows me her immediate and real self, by that sole privilege of teaching me to know myself, and what belongs to me. She gives to every inferior science its just rank; leaves some to measure sounds; others to scan syllables; others to weigh vacuums, and define spaces and extensions: but reserves to herself her due authority and majesty; keeps her state, and ancient title, of *Vitæ Dux*, *Virtutis Indagatrix*, and the rest of those just appellations which of old belonged to her, when she merited to be apostrophized, as she was, by the orator<sup>11</sup>:  
 "Tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum & disciplinæ.\*\*\* Est autem unus dies bene & ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati anteponeendus". Excellent mistress! but easy to be mistaken!

<sup>9</sup> *Luke*, ch. vi. ver. 43, 44. and *Matth.* ch. vii. ver. 16. See vol. 2. Rhapsody, part 2. § 3. parag. 21. and § 5. parag. 21.

<sup>10</sup> *Supra*, p. 90.

<sup>11</sup> *Cicero*, *Tusc. Quæst.* lib. 5.



whilst so many handmaids wear as illustrious apparel; and some are made to outshine her far in dress and ornament.

In reality, how specious a study, how solemn an amusement is raised from what we call philosophical speculations! — the formation of ideas! — their compositions, comparisons, agreement, and disagreement! — What can have a better appearance, or bid fairer for genuine and true Philosophy? Come on then. Let me philosophize in this manner; if this be indeed the way I am to grow wise. Let me examine my ideas of space and substance: let me look well into matter, and its modes; if this be looking into myself; if this be to improve my understanding, and enlarge my Mind. For of this I may soon be satisfied. Let me observe therefore, with diligence, what passes here; what connexion and consistency, what agreement or disagreement I find within: “ whether, according to my present ideas, that which  
“ I approve this hour I am like to approve as well  
“ the next; and in case it be otherwise with me,  
“ how, or after what manner, I shall relieve  
“ myself; how ascertain my ideas, and keep my  
“ opinion, liking, and esteem of things, the  
“ same.” If this remains unsolved; if I am still the same mystery to myself as ever; to what purpose is all this reasoning and acuteness? wherefore do I admire my philosopher, or study to become such a one myself?

To-day things have succeeded well with me; consequently my ideas are raised, “ It is a fine



“ world ! all is glorious ! every thing delightful and  
 “ entertaining ! mankind, conversation, company,  
 “ society ; what can be more desirable ? ” To-  
 morrow comes disappointments, crosses, disgrace.  
 And what follows ? “ O miserable mankind !  
 “ wretched state ! who would live out of solitude ?  
 “ who would write or act for such a world ? ”  
 Philosopher ! where are thy ideas ? where is truth,  
 certainty, evidence, so much talked of ? It is here,  
 surely, they are to be maintained, if any where.  
 It is here I am to preserve some just distinctions  
 and adequate ideas ; which if I cannot do a jot  
 the more by what such a philosophy can teach me,  
 the philosophy is in this respect imposing and delu-  
 sive. For whatever its other virtues are, it relates  
 not to me myself ; it concerns not the man, nor  
 any otherwise affects the mind than by the conceit  
 of knowledge, and the false assurance raised from  
 a supposed improvement.

Again, what are my ideas of the world, of  
 pleasure, riches, fame, life ? what judgment am I  
 to make of mankind and human affairs ? what  
 sentiments am I to frame ? what opinions ? what  
 maxims ? If none at all, why do I concern myself  
 in speculations about my ideas ? what is it to me,  
 for instance, to know what kind of idea I can  
 form of space ? “ Divide a solid body, of what-  
 “ ever dimension, ” says a renowned modern  
 philosopher, “ and it will be impossible for the  
 “ parts to move within the bounds of its super-  
 “ ficies ; if there be not left in it a void space ”<sup>12</sup>,

<sup>12</sup> These are the words of the particular author cited.



“ as big as the least part into which the said body  
 “ is divided. ” —

Thus the atomist, or Epicurean, pleading for a vacuum. The plenitudinarian, on the other side, brings his fluid in play, and joins the idea of body and extension. “ Of this,” says one, “ I have clear  
 “ ideas. Of this,” says the other, “ I can be certain.  
 “ And what,” say I, “ if in the whole matter there  
 “ be no certainty at all ? ” For mathematicians are divided ; and mechanics proceed as well on one hypothesis as on the other. My mind, I am satisfied, will proceed either way alike : for it is concerned on neither side. — “ Philosopher ! let me  
 “ hear concerning what is of some moment to me.  
 “ Let me hear concerning life ; what the right  
 “ notion is, and what I am to stand to, upon  
 “ occasion ; that I may not, when life seems retir-  
 “ ing, or has run itself out to the very dregs, cry  
 “ vanity ! condemn the world, and at the same  
 “ time complain, that life is short and passing ! ”  
 For why so short indeed, if not found sweet ? why do I complain both ways ? Is vanity, mere vanity, a happiness ? or can misery pass away too soon ?

• This is of moment to me to examine : this is worth my while. If, on the other side, I cannot find the agreement or disagreement of my ideas in this place ; if I can come to nothing certain here ; what is all the rest to me ? what signifies it how I come by my ideas, or how compound them ; which are simple, and which complex ? If I have a right idea of life, now when perhaps I think



slightly of it, and resolve with myself, “that it  
 “may easily be laid down on any honorable  
 “occasion of service to my friends or country;”  
 teach me how I may preserve this idea: or, at  
 least, how I may get safely rid of it; that it may  
 trouble me no more, nor lead me into ill adven-  
 tures. Teach me how I came by such an opinion  
 of worth and virtue; what it is which at one time  
 raises it so high, and at another time reduces it to  
 nothing; how these disturbances and fluctuations  
 happen; “by what innovation, what composition,  
 “what intervention of other ideas.” If this be the  
 subject of the philosophical art, I readily apply to  
 it, and embrace the study. If there be nothing  
 of this in the case, I have no occasion for this  
 sort of learning; and am no more desirous of  
 knowing how I form or compound those ideas  
 which are marked by words, than I am of know-  
 ing how, and by what motions of my tongue or  
 palate I form those articulate sounds, which I can  
 full as well pronounce, without any such science  
 or speculation.

## SECT. II.

**BUT** here it may be convenient for me to quit  
 myself a while in favor of my reader, lest, if he  
 prove one of the uncourteous sort, he should raise  
 a considerable objection in this place. He may ask  
 perhaps, “Why a writer for self-entertainment



“ should not keep his writings to himself, without appearing in public, or before the world?”

In answer to this, I shall only say, that for appearing in public, or before the world, I do not readily conceive what our worthy objector may understand by it. I can call to mind, indeed, among my acquaintance, certain merchant-adventurers in the letter-trade, who, in correspondence with their factor-bookfeller, are entered into a notable commerce with the world. They have directly, and in due form of preface, and epistle dedicatory, solicited the public, and made interest with friends for favor and protection on this account. They have ventured, perhaps, to join some great man's reputation with their own; having obtained his permission to address a work to him, on presumption of its passing for something considerable in the eyes of mankind. One may easily imagine that such patronized and avowed authors as these, would be shrewdly disappointed if the public took no notice of their labors. But for my own part, it is of no concern to me, what regard the public bestows on my amusements; or after what manner it comes acquainted with what I write for my private entertainment, or by way of advice to such of my acquaintance as are thus desperately embarked.

It is requisite that my friends, who peruse these advices, should read them in better characters than those of my own hand-writing. And by good luck I have a very fair hand offered, which may save me the trouble of recopying, and can



readily furnish me with as many handsome copies as I would desire, for my own and friends service. I have not, indeed, forbid my amanuensis the making as many as he pleases for his own benefit. What I write, is not worth being made a mystery. And if it be worth any one's purchasing, much good may do the purchaser. It is a traffic I have no share in, though I accidentally furnish the subject-matter.

And thus am I no wise more an Author, for being in print. I am conscious of no additional virtue, or dangerous quality, from having lain at any time under the weight of that alphabetic engine called the press. I know no conjuration in it, either with respect to church or state. Nor can I imagine why the machine should appear so formidable to scholars and renowned clerks, whose very mystery and foundation depends on the letter-manufacture. To allow benefit of clergy, and to restrain the press, seems to me to have something of cross purpose in it. I can hardly think, that the quality of what is written can be altered by the manner of writing; or that there can be any harm in a quick way of copying fair, and keeping copies alike. Why a man may not be permitted to write with iron as well as quill, I cannot conceive; or how a writer changes his capacity, by this new dress, any more than by the wear of wove stockings, after having worn no other manufacture than the knit.

So much for my reader; if perchance I have any besides the friend or two above-mentioned.



For being engaged in morals, and induced to treat so rigorous a subject as that of self-examination, I naturally call to mind the extreme delicacy and tenderness of modern appetites, in respect of the philosophy of this kind. What distaste possibly may have arisen from some medicinal doses of a like nature, administered to raw stomachs, at a very early age, I will not pretend to examine. But whatever manner in philosophy happens to bear the least resemblance to that of catechism, cannot, I am persuaded, of itself, prove very inviting. Such a smart way of questioning ourselves in our youth, has made our manhood more averse to the expostulatory discipline. And though the metaphysical points of our belief are by this method, with admirable care and caution, instilled into tender minds; yet the manner of thus anticipating philosophy, may make the after-work of reason, and the inward exercise of the mind, at a riper age, proceed the more heavily, and with greater reluctance.

It must needs be a hard case with us, after having passed so learned a childhood, and been instructed in our own and other higher natures, essences, incorporeal substances, personalities, and the like; to condescend at riper years to ruminate and con over this lesson a second time. It is hard, after having, by so many pertinent interrogatories, and decisive sentences, declared, who and what we are; to come leisurely, in another view, to inquire concerning our real Self, and



End, the judgment we are to make of Interest, and the opinion we should have of Advantage and Good: which is what must necessarily determine us in our conduct, and prove the leading principle of our lives.

Can we bear looking anew into these mysteries? can we endure a new schooling, after having once learned our lesson from the world?

Hardly, I presume. For by the lesson of this latter school, and according to the sense I acquire in converse with prime men; should I at any time ask myself, What governed me? I should answer readily, My interest.

“But what is interest?”  
 “and how governed?” By opinion and fancy.  
 “Is every thing, therefore, my interest which I fancy such? or may my fancy possibly be wrong?” It may.  
 “If my fancy of interest therefore be wrong; can my pursuit or aim be right?” Hardly so.  
 “Can I then be supposed to hit, when I know not, in reality, so much as how to aim?”

My chief interest, it seems therefore, must be to get an aim; and know certainly where my happiness and advantage lies.  
 “Where else can it lie, than in my pleasure; since my advantage and good must ever be pleasing: and what is pleasing, can never be other than my advantage and good?” Excellent! Let fancy therefore govern, and interest be what we please. For if that which pleases us be our good<sup>1</sup>, because it pleases us, any thing may

<sup>1</sup> Rhapsody, part 2. § 1. parag. 11. in vol. 2. and vol. 3. misc. 4. ch. 1. parag. 26.



“ be our Interest or Good. Nothing can come  
 “ amiss. That which we fondly make our hap-  
 “ piness at one time, we may as readily unmake  
 “ at another. No one can learn what real Good  
 “ is. Nor can any one upon this foot be said to  
 “ understand his Interest.”

Here we see are strange embroils! — But let us try to deal more candidly with ourselves, and frankly own, that pleasure<sup>2</sup> is no rule of Good; since when we follow pleasure merely, we are disgusted, and change from one sort to another; condemning that at one time, which at another we earnestly approve; and never judging equally of happiness, whilst we follow passion and mere humor.

A lover, for instance, when struck with the idea or fancy of his enjoyment, promises himself the highest felicity, if he succeeds in his new amour — He succeeds in it; finds not the felicity he expected; but promises himself the same again in some other. — The same thing happens: he is disappointed as before; but still has faith. — Wearied with this game, he quits the chase; renounces the way of courtship and intrigue, and detests the ceremony and difficulty of the pleasure. — A new species of amours invites him. Here too he meets the same inquietude and inconstancy. — Scorning to grow sottish, and plunge in the lowest sink of vice, he shakes off his intemperance; despises gluttony and riot; and hearkens to ambition. He

<sup>2</sup> *Infra*, § 3. parag. 12.



grows a man of business, and seeks authority and fame. —

*Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo* <sup>3</sup>?

Left this therefore should be my own case, let me see whether I can control my fancy, and fix it, if possible, on something which may hold good. — When I exercise my reason in moral subjects; when I employ my affection in friendly and social actions, I find I can sincerely enjoy myself. If there be a pleasure therefore of this kind, why not indulge it? or what harm would there be, supposing it should grow greater by indulgence? If I am lazy, and indulge myself in the languid pleasure, I know the harm, and can foresee the drone. If I am luxurious, I know the harm of this also, and have the plain prospect of the sot. If avarice be my pleasure, the end, I know, is being a miser. But if Honesty be my delight, I know no other consequence from indulging such a passion, than that of growing better-natured, and enjoying more and more the pleasures of society. On the other hand, if this honest pleasure be lost, by knavish indulgence and immorality, there can hardly be a satisfaction left of any kind; since good-nature and social affection <sup>4</sup> are so essential even to the pleasures of a debauch.

<sup>3</sup> *Hor. epist. 1. lib. 1.*

<sup>4</sup> *Inquiry, book 2. part 2. parag. 40. in vol. 2.*



If, therefore, the only pleasure I can freely and without reserve indulge, be that of the honest and moral kind; if the rational and social enjoyment be so constant in itself, and so essential to happiness, why should I not bring my other pleasures to correspond and be friends with it, rather than raise myself other pleasures, which are destructive of this foundation, and have no manner of correspondency with one another?

Upon this bottom, let me try how I can bear the assault of Fancy, and maintain myself in my moral fortrefs, against the attacks which are raised on the side of corrupt interest and a wrong self. When the idea of pleasure strikes, I ask myself: "Before I was thus struck by the idea, was any thing amiss with me? No. Therefore remove the idea, and I am well. But having this idea such as I now have, I cannot want the thing without regret. See, therefore, which is best; either to suffer under this want till the idea be removed; or, by satisfying the want, confirm not only this idea, but all of the same stamp?"

In reality, has not every Fancy a like privilege of passing, if any single one be admitted upon its own authority? And what must be the issue of such an œconomy, if the whole fantastic crew be introduced, and the door refused to none? What else is it than this management which leads to the most dissolute and profligate of characters? What is it, on the contrary, which raises us to any degree of worth or steadiness,



besides a direct contrary practice and conduct? Can there be strength of mind; can there be command over one's self; if the ideas of pleasure, the suggestions of fancy, and the strong pleadings of appetite and desire are not often withstood, and the imaginations soundly reprimanded, and brought under subjection?

Thus it appears, that the method of examining our ideas is no pedantic practice. Nor is there any thing ungallant in the manner of thus questioning the lady-fancies, which present themselves as charmingly dressed as possible, to solicit their cause, and obtain a judgment, by favor of that worse part, and corrupt Self, to whom they make their application.

It may be justly said of these, that they are very powerful solicitresses. They never seem to importune us, though they are ever in our eye, and meet us whichever way we turn. They understand better how to manage their appearance, than by always throwing up their vail, and showing their faces openly in a broad light, to run the danger of cloying our sight, or exposing their features to a strict examination. So far are they from such forwardness, that they often stand as at a distance, suffering us to make the first advance, and contenting themselves with discovering a side-face, or bestowing now and then a glance in a mysterious manner, as if they endeavoured to conceal their persons.

One of the most dangerous of these enchantresses appears in a sort of dismal weed, with the



most mournful countenance imaginable ; often casting up her eyes , and wringing her hands ; so that it is impossible not to be moved by her , till her meaning be considered , and her imposture fully known. The airs she borrows , are from the tragic muse Melpomene. Nor is she in her own person any way amiable or attractive. Far from it. Her art is , to render herself as forbidding as possible , that her sisters may , by her means , be the more alluring. And if , by her tragic aspect , and melancholy looks , she can persuade us , that death (whom she represents) is such a hideous form ; she conquers in behalf of the whole fantastic tribe of wanton , gay , and fond desires. Effeminacy and cowardice instantly prevail. The poorest means of life grow in repute , when the ends and just conditions of it are so little known , and the dread of parting with it raised to so high a degree. The more eagerly we grasp at life , the more impotent we are in the enjoyment of it. By this avidity , its very lees and dregs are swallowed ; the ideas of sordid pleasure are advanced. Worth , manhood , generosity , and all the nobler opinions and sentiments of honest Good , and virtuous pleasure , disappear , and fly before this queen of terrors.

It is a mighty delight which a sort of counter-philosophers take in seconding this phantom , and playing her upon our understandings , whenever they would take occasion to confound them. The vicious poets employ this spectre too on their side ; though after a different manner. By the



help of this tragic actresses, they gain a fairer audience for the luxurious fancies, and give their Eratos, and other playsome muses, a fuller scope in the support of riot and debauch. The gloomy prospect of death becomes the incentive to pleasures of the lowest order. Ashes and shade, the tomb and cypress, are made to serve as foils to Luxury. The abhorrence of an insensible state makes mere vitality and animal sensation highly cherished.

*Indulge genio: carpatius dulcia, nostrum est  
Quod vivis: cinis, et manes et fabula fiet*<sup>5</sup>.

It is no wonder if Luxury profits by the deformity of this spectre-opinion. She supports her interest by this childish bugbear; and, like a mother by her infant, is hugged so much the closer by her votary, as the fear presses him, and grows importunate. She invites him to live fast, according to her best measure of life. And well she may. Who would not willingly make life pass away as quickly as was possible, when the nobler pleasures of it were already lost or corrupted by a wretched fear of death? The intense selfishness and meanness which accompanies this fear, must reduce us to a low ebb of enjoyment, and in a manner bring to nothing that main sum of satisfactory sensations, by which we vulgarly rate the happiness of our private condition and fortune.

<sup>5</sup> *Pers. Sat. 5.*



But see ! a lovely form advances to our assistance, introduced by the prime muse, the beautiful Calliope ! She shows us what real beauty is, and what those numbers are, which make life perfect, and bestow the chief enjoyment. She sets virtue before our eyes, and teaches us how to rate life, from the experience of the most heroic spirits. She brings her sisters Clio and Urania to support her. From the former she borrows whatever is memorable in history and ancient time, to confront the tragic spectre, and show the fixed contempt which the happiest and freest nations, as well as single heroes, and private men worthy of any note, have ever expressed for that impostress. From the latter she borrows what is sublimest in philosophy, to explain the laws of nature, the order of the universe, and represent to us the justice of accompanying this amiable administration. She shows us, that by this just compliance we are made happiest ; and that the measure of a happy life is not from the fewer or more suns we behold, the fewer or more breaths we draw, or meals we repeat ; but from the having once lived well, acted our part handsomely, and made our exit chearfully, and as became us.

Thus we retain on virtue's side the noblest party of the muses. Whatever is august among those sisters, appears readily in our behalf. Nor are the more jocund ladies wanting in their assistance, when they act in the perfection of their art, and inspire some better geniuses in this kind of poetry.

Such



Such were the nobler lyrics, and those of the latter and more refined comedy of the ancients. The Thalias, the Polyhymnias, the Terpsychores, the Euterpes, willingly join their parts; and being alike interested in the cause of numbers, are with regret employed another way, in favor of disorder. Instead of being made Syrens, to serve the purposes of vice, they would with more delight accompany their elder sisters, and add their graces and attractive charms to what is most harmonious, muse-like, and divine in human life. There is this difference only between these and the more heroic dames, that they can more easily be perverted, and take the vicious form. For what person of any genius or masterly command in the poetic art, could think of bringing the epic or tragic muse to act the pander, or be subservient to effeminacy and cowardice? It is not against death, hazards, or toils, that tragedy and the heroic fable are pointed. It is not mere life which is here exalted, or has its price enhanced. On the contrary, its calamities are exposed; the disorders of the passions set to view; fortitude recommended; honor advanced; the contempt of death placed as the peculiar note of every generous and happy soul; and the tenacious love of life, as the truest character of an abject wretch.

*Usque adeone mori miserum est* \* ? —

\* *Virg. Æneid. lib. 12.*



It is not to be imagined how easily we deal with the deluding apparitions and false ideas of happiness and good ; when this frightful spectre of misery and ill is after this manner well laid , and by honest magic conjured down ; so as not to give the least assistance to the other tempting forms. This is that occult science , or sort of counter-necromancy , which , instead of ghastliness and horror , inspires only what is gentle and humane , and dispels the imposing phantoms of every kind. He may pass undoubtedly for no mean conjurer , who can deal with spirits of this sort. — But hold ! — Let us try the experiment in due form , and draw the magic circle. Let us observe how the inferior imps appear when the head-goblin is securely laid. —

See the enchantress Indolence presents herself , in all the pomp of ease and lazy luxury. She promises the sweetest life , and invites us to her pillow ; enjoins us to expose ourselves to no adventurous attempt ; and forbids us any engagement which may bring us into action. “ Where  
 “ then are the pleasures which Ambition promises ,  
 “ and Love affords ? How is the gay world enjoyed ? Or are those to be esteemed no pleasures , which are lost by dulness and inaction ?  
 “ But indolence is the highest pleasure. To  
 “ live , and not to feel ! To feel no trouble.  
 “ What good then ? Life itself. And  
 “ is this properly to live ? Is sleeping life ? Is  
 “ this what I should study to prolong ? ” —  
 Here the fantastic tribe itself seems scandalized.



A civil war begins. The major part of the capricious dames range themselves on Reason's side, and declare against the languid Syren. Ambition blushes at the offered sweet. Conceit and Vanity take superior airs. Even Luxury herself, in her polite and elegant humor, reproves the apostate sister, and marks her as an alien to true pleasure. — "Away, thou drowsy phantom! "haunt me no more; for I have learned from "better than thy sisterhood, that life and happiness "consist in action and employment."

But here a busy form solicits us; active, industrious, watchful, and despising pains and labor. She wears the serious countenance of Virtue, but with features of anxiety and disquiet. What is it she mutters? What looks she on with such admiration and astonishment? — Bags! coffers! heaps of shining metal! "What! for the service "of luxury? for her these preparations? Art "thou then her friend, grave Fancy! Is it for her "thou toilest? No; but for provision against "want. But Luxury apart, tell me now, hast "thou not already a competence? It is good "to be secure against the fear of starving. Is "there then no death beside this? no other passage "out of life? Are other doors secured, if this "be barred? Say, Avarice, thou emptiest of "phantoms! is it not vile Cowardice thou servest? "What further have I then to do with thee, "thou doubly vile dependent! when once I "have dismissed thy patroness, and despised her "threats?"



Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion<sup>7</sup>, and search the mint and foundery of Imagination. For here the appetites and desires are fabricated. Hence they derive their privilege and currency. If I can stop the mischief here, and prevent false coinage, I am safe.

“ Idea ! wait a while till  
 “ I have examined thee, whence thou art, and  
 “ to whom thou retainest. Art thou of Ambition’s  
 “ train ? or dost thou promise only pleasure ? Say !  
 “ what am I to sacrifice for thy sake ? what  
 “ honor ? what truth ? what manhood ? ——  
 “ What bribe is it thou bringest along with thee ?  
 “ Describe the flattering object, but without  
 “ flattery ; plain, as the thing is ; without addition,  
 “ without sparing or reserve. Is it wealth ? is it  
 “ a report ? a title ? or a female ? Come not in  
 “ a troop, ye fancies ! bring not your objects  
 “ crowding, to confound the sight. But let me  
 “ examine your worth and weight distinctly. Think  
 “ not to raise accumulative happiness. For if,  
 “ separately, you contribute nothing ; in conjunction,  
 “ you can only amuse. ”

Whilst I am thus penning a soliloquy in form, I cannot forbear reflecting on my work. And when I view the manner of it with a familiar eye, I am readier, I find, to make myself diversion on this occasion, than to suppose I am in good earnest about a work of consequence. “ What !  
 “ am I to be thus fantastical ? must I busy myself  
 “ with phantoms ? fight with apparitions and

<sup>7</sup> Vol. 3. misc. 4. ch. 1. parag. 21. &c.



“ chimeras ?            For certain : or the chimeras  
 “ will be beforehand with me , and busy them-  
 “ selves so as to get the better of my under-  
 “ standing.            What ! talk to myself like some  
 “ madman , in different persons , and under different  
 “ characters !            Undoubtedly : or it will be  
 “ soon seen who is a real madman , and changes  
 “ character in earnest , without knowing how to  
 “ help it. ”

This indeed is but too certain , that as long as we enjoy a Mind , as long as we have appetites and sense , the fancies of all kinds will be hard at work ; and whether we are in company , or alone , they must range still , and be active. They must have their field. The question is , Whether they shall have it wholly to themselves , or whether they shall acknowledge some controuler or manager ? If none , it is this , I fear , which leads to madness. It is this , and nothing else , which can be called madness , or loss of reason. For if Fancy be left judge of any thing , she must be judge of all. Every thing is right , if any thing be so , because I fancy it.            “ The

“ house turns round.    The prospect turns.  
 “ No , but my head turns indeed : I have a  
 “ giddiness ; that is all. Fancy would persuade me  
 “ thus and thus : but I know better. ”            It is  
 by means , therefore , of a controller and corrector of fancy , that I am saved from being mad. Otherwise , it is the house turns , when I am giddy : it is things which change , ( for so I must suppose ) , when my passion merely , or temper ,



changes. " But I was out of order. I dream-  
 " ed. Who tells me this ? Who besides  
 " the Correctrice , by whose means I am in my  
 " wits , and without whom I am no longer  
 " myself ? "

Every man indeed who is not absolutely beside himself, must of necessity hold his fancies under some kind of discipline and management. The stricter this discipline is , the more the man is rational , and in his wits. The looser it is , the more fantastical he must be , and the nearer to the madman's state. This is a business which can never stand still. I must always be winner or loser at the game. Either I work upon my fancies , or they on me. If I give quarter , they will not. There can be no truce , no suspension of arms between us. The one or the other must be superior , and have the command. For if the fancies are left to themselves , the government must of course be theirs. And then , what difference between such a state and madness ?

The question therefore is the same here , as in a family or household , when it is asked , " Who rules ? or , Who is master ? " Learn by the voices. Observe who speaks aloud , in a commanding tone ; who talks , who questions ; or who is talked with , and who questioned. For if the servants take the former part , they are the masters , and the government of the house will be found such as naturally may be expected in these circumstances.

How stands it therefore , in my own œconomy ,



my principal province and command ? How stand my fancies ? how deal they with me ? or do I take upon me rather to deal with them ? Do I talk, question, arraign ? or am I talked with, arraigned, and contented to hear, without giving a reply ? If I vote with Fancy, resign my opinion<sup>s</sup> to her command, and judge of happiness and misery as she judges, how am I myself ?

He who in a plain imagines precipices at his feet ; impending rocks over his head ; fears bursting clouds in a clear sky ; cries Fire ! Deluge ! Earthquake ! or Thunder ! when all is quiet : does he not rave ? But one whose eyes seemingly strike fire by a blow ; one whose head is giddy from the motion of a ship, after having been newly set ashore ; or one who, from a distemper in his ear, hears thundering noises ; can readily redress these several apprehensions, and is by this means saved from madness.

A distemper in my eye may make me see the strangest kind of figures : and when cataracts and other impurities are gathering in that organ, flies, insects, and other various forms, seem playing in the air before me. But let my senses err ever so widely, I am not on this account beside myself : nor am I out of my own possession, whilst there is a person left within, who has power to dispute the appearances, and redress the imagination.

I am accosted by ideas and striking apprehensions : but I take nothing on their report. I hear

<sup>s</sup> Vol. 3. misc. 4. ch. 1. parag. 22.



their story , and return them answer , as they deserve. Fancy and I are not all one. The disagreement makes me my own. When, on the contrary, I have no debate with her, no controversy , but take for happiness and misery , for good and ill , whatever she presents as such ; I must then join voices with her , and cry Precipice ! Fire ! Cerberus ! Elysium !

*“ Sandy deserts ! flowery fields !*

*“ Seas of milk , and ships of amber !”*

A Grecian prince, who had the same madness as Alexander, and was deeply struck with the fancy of conquering worlds, was ingeniously shown the method of expostulating with his lady-governess ; when by a discreet friend, and at an easy hour, he was asked little by little concerning his design, and the final purpose, and promised good, which the flattering dame proposed to him. The story is sufficiently noted. All the artifice employed against the prince was a well-managed interrogatory of What next ? Lady Fancy was not aware of the design upon her, but let herself be wormed out by degrees. At first, she said the prince's design was only upon a tract of land, which stood out like a promontory before him, and seemed to eclipse his glory. A fair rich island, which was close by, presented itself next, and, as it were, naturally invited conquest. The opposite coast came next in view. Then the continent on each side the larger sea. And then (what was easiest of all, and would



follow of course) the dominion both of sea and land. "And what next?" replied the friend. "What shall we do, when we are become thus happy, and have obtained our highest wish?" "Why then, we will sit down peaceably, and be good company over a bottle. Alas, Sir! what hinders us from doing the same, where we now are? Will our humor, or our wine, grow better? Shall we be more secure, or at heart's ease? What you may possibly lose by these attempts, is easy to conceive. But which way you will be a gainer, your own fancy (you see) cannot so much as suggest." Fancy in the mean while carried her point: for she was absolute over the monarch; and had been too little talked to by herself, to bear being reprov'd in company. The prince grew sullen; turned the discourse; abhorred the profanation offered to his sovereign-empress; delivered up his thoughts to her again with deep devotion, and fell to conquering with all his might. The sound of victory rung in his ears. Laurels and crowns played before his eyes. — What was this beside giddiness and dream? appearances uncorrected? "Worlds dancing? phantoms playing?"

*"Seas of milk, and ships of amber!"*

It is easy to bring the hero's case home to ourselves; and see, in the ordinary circumstances of life, how love, ambition, and the gayer tribe of fancies, (as well as the gloomy and dark spectres



of another sort), prevail over our mind. It is easy to observe how they work on us, when we refuse to be beforehand with them, and bestow repeated lessons on the encroaching forcereffes. On this it is, that our offered Advice and method of Soliloquy depends. And whether this be of any use towards making us either wiser or happier, I am confident, it must help to make us wittier and politer. It must, beyond any other science, teach us the turns of humor and passion, the variety of manners, the justness of characters, and Truth of things; which when we rightly understand, we may naturally describe. And on this depends chiefly the skill and art of a good writer. So that if to write well be a just pretence to merit, it is plain, that writers, who are apt to set no small value on their art, must confess there is something valuable in this self-examining practice, and method of inward colloquy.

As for the writer of these papers, (as modern authors are pleased modestly to style themselves), he is contented, for his part, to take up with this practice, barely for his own proper benefit; without regard to the high function or capacity of author. It may be allowed him, in this particular, to imitate the best genius and most gentleman-like of Roman poets. And though, by an excess of dulness, it should be his misfortune to learn nothing of this poet's wit, he is persuaded he may learn something of his honesty and good humor.

• ——— *Nueqe enim, cum lectulus, aut Me*

• *Hor. sat. 4. lib. 1.*



*Porticus excepit, desum Mibi: "Rectius hoc est:  
 "Hoc faciens, vivam melius: sic dulcis amicis  
 "Occurram." ——— Hæc Ego Mecum  
 Compressis agito labris. ——— 1°.*

S E C T. III.

WE are now arrived to that part of our performance, where it becomes us to cast our eye back on what has already passed. The observers of method generally make this the place of recapitulation. Other artists have substituted the practice of Apology, or extenuation. For the anticipating manner of prefatory discourse is too well known, to work any surprising effect in the author's behalf; Preface being become only another word to signify excuse; besides that the author is generally the most straitened in that preliminary part, which on other accounts is too apt to grow voluminous. He therefore takes the advantage of his corollary or winding-up; and ends pathetically, by endeavour-

1° And again,

*Quocirca Mecum loquor hæc, tacitusque recordor:*

*Si tibi nulla sitim finiret copia lymphæ,*

*Narrares medicis: quod quanto plura parasti,*

*Tanto plura cupis, nulline faterier audes? \* \* \* \**

*Non es avarus: abi, quid? cætera jam simul isto*

*Cum vitio fugere? caret tibi pectus inani*

*Ambitione? caret mortis formidine et ira?*

*Id. epist. 2. lib. 2.*



ing in the softest manner to reconcile his reader to those faults which he chuses rather to excuse than to amend.

General practice has made this a necessary part of elegance, hardly to be passed over by any writer. It is the chief stratagem by which he engages in personal conference with his reader; and can talk immoderately of himself, with all the seeming modesty of one who is the furthest from any selfish views, or conceited thoughts of his own merit. There appears such a peculiar grace and ingenuity in the method of confessing laziness, precipitancy, carelessness, or whatever other vices have been the occasion of the author's deficiency, that it would seem a pity, had the work itself been brought to such perfection as to have left no room for the penitent party to enlarge on his own demerits. For, from the multiplicity of these, he finds subjects to ingratiate himself with his reader; who doubtless is not a little raised by this submission of a confessing author; and is ready, on these terms, to give him absolution, and receive him into his good grace and favor.

In the gallant world, indeed, we easily find how far a humility of this kind prevails. They who hope to rise by Merit, are likeliest to be disappointed in their pretensions. The confessing lover, who ascribes all to the bounty of the fair-one, meets his reward the sooner, for having studied less how to deserve it. For Merit is generally thought presumptuous, and supposed to carry with it a certain assurance and ease, with which a



mistress is not so well contented. The claim of well deserving seems to derogate from the pure grace and favor of the benefactrice; who then appears to herself most sovereign in power, and likeliest to be obeyed without reserve, when she bestows her bounty, where there is least title or pretension.

Thus a certain adoration of the sex, which passes in our age without the least charge of profaneness or idolatry, may, according to vulgar imagination, serve to justify these gallant votaries, in the imitation of the real religious and devout. The method of self-abasement<sup>1</sup> may perhaps be thought the properest to make approaches to the sacred shrines: and the entire resignation of merit, in each case, may be esteemed the only ground of well-deserving. But what we allow to heaven, or to the fair, should not, methinks, be made a precedent in favor of the world. Whatever deference is due to that body of men whom we call readers, we may be supposed to treat them with sufficient honor, if, with thorough diligence and pains, we endeavour to render our works perfect, and leave them to judge of the performance, as they are able.

However difficult or desperate it may appear in any artist to endeavour to bring perfection into his work, if he has not at least the idea of Perfection to give him aim, he will be found very defective and mean in his performance. Though

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 31.



his intention be to please the world, he must nevertheless be in a manner above it; and fix his eye upon that consummate grace, that beauty of nature, and that perfection of numbers, which the rest of mankind, feeling only by the effect, whilst ignorant of the cause, term the *je-ne-sçai-quoi*, the unintelligible, or the I know not what, and suppose to be a kind of charm or enchantment, of which the artist himself can give no account.

But here, I find, I am tempted to do what I have myself condemned. Hardly can I forbear making some apology for my frequent recourse to the rules of common artists, to the masters of exercise, to the academies of painters, statuaries, and to the rest of the virtuoso tribe. But in this I am so fully satisfied I have reason on my side, that, let custom be ever so strong against me, I had rather repair to these inferior schools, to search for Truth and Nature, than to some other places where higher arts and sciences are professed.

I am persuaded, that to be a virtuoso (so far as befits a gentleman), is a higher step towards the becoming a man of virtue and good sense, than the being what in this age we call a scholar<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> It seems indeed somewhat improbable, that according to modern erudition, and as science is now distributed, our ingenious and noble youths should obtain the full advantage of a just and liberal education, by uniting the *scholar*-part with that of the *real gentleman* and *man of breeding*. Academies for exercises, so useful to the public, and essential in the formation of a genteel and liberal character, are unfortunately neglected. Letters are indeed banished, I know not where, in distant cloisters and *unpractised cells*, as our poet has it, confined to the commerce and



### Sect. 3. ADVICE TO AN AUTHOR. 287

For even rude nature itself, in its primitive simplicity, is a better guide to judgment, than improved sophistry, and pedantic learning. The “*Faciunt, næ,*

mean *fellowship* of *bearded boys*. The sprightly arts and sciences are severed from *philosophy*, which consequently must grow *droneish*, *insipid*, *pedantic*, *useless*, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world and mankind. Our youth accordingly seem to have their only chance between two widely different roads; either that of *pedantry* and *school-learning*, which lies amidst the dregs and most corrupt part of ancient literature; or that of the *fashionable illiterate world*, which aims merely at the character of the *fine gentleman*, and takes up with the *foppery* of modern languages and foreign wit. The frightful aspect of the former of these roads makes the journey appear desperate and impracticable. Hence that aversion so generally conceived against a *learned character*, wrong turned, and hideously set out, under such difficulties, and in such seeming labyrinths, and mysterious forms. As if a *Homer* or a *Xenophon* imperfectly learned, in raw years, might not afterwards, in a riper age, be studied, as well in a *capital city* and amidst the world, as at a *college*, or *country-town*! or as if a *Plutarch*, a *Tully*, or a *Horace*, could not accompany a young man in his *travels*, at a *court*, or (if occasion were) even in a *camp*! The case is not without precedent. Leisure is found sufficient for other reading of numerous modern translations, and worse originals, of *Italian* or *French* authors, who are read merely for amusement. The *French* indeed may boast of some legitimate authors, of a just relish, correct, and without any mixture of the affected or spurious kinds; the *false tender*, or the *false sublime*; the conceited *jingle*, or the ridiculous *point*. They are such geniuses as have been formed upon the natural model of the ancients and willingly own their debt to those great masters. But for the rest, who draw from another fountain, as the *Italian* authors in particular, they may be reckoned no better than the corrupters of true learning and erudition; and can indeed be relished by those alone, whose education has unfortunately denied them the familiarity of the noble ancients, and the practice of a better and more natural *taste*. See above, p. 247. & Rhapsody, part 1. § 1. parag. 8. &c. in vol. 2.



“ intelligendo , ut nihil intelligent , ” will ever be applied by men of discernment and free thought to such logic , such principles , such forms and rudiments of knowledge , as are established in certain schools of literature and science. The case is sufficiently understood even by those who are unwilling to confess the truth of it. Effects betray their causes. And the known turn and figure of those understandings which sprout from nurseries of this kind , give a plain idea of what is judged on this occasion. It is no wonder , if , after so wrong a ground of education , there appears to be such need of redress and amendment , from that excellent school which we call the world. The mere amusements of gentlemen are found more improving than the profound researches of pedants. And in the management of our youth , we are forced to have recourse to the former , as an antidote against the genius peculiar to the latter. If the formalists of this sort were erected into patentees , with a sole commission of authorship , we should undoubtedly see such writing in our days , as would either wholly wean us from all books in general , or at least from all such as were the product of our nation , under such a subordinate and conforming government.

However this may prove , there can be no kind of writing which relates to men and manners , where it is not necessary for the author<sup>3</sup> to understand poetical and moral Truth , the beauty of sentiments , the sublime of characters ; and carry

<sup>3</sup> *Supra* , p. 179.



in his eye the model or exemplar of that natural grace which gives to every action its attractive charm. If he has naturally no eye or ear for these interior numbers, it is not likely he should be able to judge better of that exterior proportion and symmetry of composition, which constitutes a legitimate piece.

Could we once convince ourselves of what is in itself so evident \*, “That, in the very nature  
“ of things, there must of necessity be the foun-  
“ dation of a right and wrong Taste, as well in  
“ respect of inward characters and features, as of  
“ outward person, behaviour, and action;” we should be far more ashamed of ignorance and wrong judgment in the former than in the latter of these subjects. Even in the arts, which are mere imitations of that outward grace and beauty, we not only confess a taste, but make it a part of refined breeding, to discover, amidst the many false manners and ill styles, the true and natural one, which represents the real beauty and Venus of the kind †. It is the like moral Grace and Venus, which, discovering itself in the turns of character, and the variety of human affections, is copied by the writing artist. If he knows not this Venus, these Graces, nor was ever struck with the beauty, the decorum of this inward kind, he can neither paint advantageously after the life,

\* Vol. 3. misc. 3. ch. 2. parag. 2. & ib. parag. 25.

† *Supra*, p. 119. &c. and vol. 3. misc. 3. ch. 2. parag. 29. in the notes.



nor in a feigned subject, where he has full scope<sup>6</sup>. For never can he, on these terms, represent merit and virtue, or mark deformity and blemish. Never can he, with justice and true proportion, assign the boundaries of either part, or separate the distant characters. The schemes must be defective, and the draughts confused, where the standard is weakly established, and the measure out of use. Such a designer, who has so little feeling of these proportions, so little consciousness of this excellence, or these perfections, will never be found able to describe a perfect character; or, what is more according to art<sup>7</sup>, “express the effect and “force of this perfection, from the result of various and mixed characters of life.” And thus the sense of inward numbers, the knowledge and practice of the social virtues, and the familiarity and favor of the moral Graces, are essential to the character of a deserving artist, and just favorite of the Muses. Thus are the arts and virtues mutually friends: and thus the science of virtuosos, and that of virtue itself, become in a manner one and the same.

One who aspires to the character of a man of breeding and politeness, is careful to form his judgment of arts and sciences upon right models of perfection. If he travels to Rome, he inquires which are the truest pieces of architecture, the best remains of statues, the best paintings of a

<sup>6</sup> *Supra*, p. 179.

<sup>7</sup> Misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 6. from the end, in the notes, in vol. 3.



Raphael, or a Carache. However antiquated, rough, or dismal, they may appear to him at first sight, he resolves to view them over and over, till he has brought himself to relish them, and finds their hidden graces and perfections. He takes particular care to turn his eye from every thing which is gaudy, luscious, and of a false taste. Nor is he less careful to turn his ear from every sort of music, besides that which is of the best manner, and truest harmony.

It were to be wished, we had the same regard to a right Taste in life and manners. What mortal, being once convinced of a difference in inward character, and of a preference due to one kind above another, would not be concerned to make his own the best? If civility and humanity be a Taste; if brutality, insolence, riot, be in the same manner a Taste; who, if he could reflect, would not chuse to form himself on the amiable and agreeable, rather than the odious and perverse model? Who would not endeavour to force Nature as well in this respect, as in what relates to a taste or judgment in other arts and sciences? For in each place the force on Nature is used only for its redress. If a natural good Taste be not already formed in us, why should not we endeavour to form it, and become natural? —

“ I like! I fancy! I admire!                      How?

“ By accident, or as I please.                      No. But I

“ learn to fancy, to admire, to please, as the

“ subjects themselves are deserving, and can bear

“ me out. Otherwise, I like at this hour, but



“ dislike the next. I shall be weary of my  
 “ pursuit; and, upon experience, find little plea-  
 “ sure in the main<sup>\*</sup>, if my choice and judgment  
 “ in it be from no other rule than that single  
 “ one, because I please. Grotesque and monstrous  
 “ figures often please. Cruel spectacles, and bar-  
 “ barities are also found to please, and, in some  
 “ tempers, to please beyond all other subjects.  
 “ But is this pleasure right? and shall I follow it,  
 “ if it presents? not strive with it, or endeavour  
 “ to prevent its growth or prevalency in my  
 “ temper? — How stands the case in a more soft  
 “ and flattering kind of pleasure? — Effeminacy  
 “ pleases me. The Indian figures, the Japan  
 “ work, the enamel strikes my eye. The luscious  
 “ colors, and glossy paint, gain upon my fancy.  
 “ A French or Flemish style is highly liked by me  
 “ at first sight; and I pursue my liking. But  
 “ what ensues? — Do I not for ever forfeit my  
 “ good relish? How is it possible I should thus  
 “ come to taste the beauties of an Italian master,  
 “ or of a hand happily formed on nature and  
 “ the ancients? It is not by wantonness and hu-  
 “ mor that I shall attain my end, and arrive at  
 “ the enjoyment I propose. The art itself is  
 “ severe, the rules rigid<sup>†</sup>. And if I expect the

<sup>\*</sup> *Supra*, p. 266.; and vol. 2. rhapsody, part 2. § 1. parag. 11.

<sup>†</sup> Thus *Pliny*, speaking with a masterly judgment of the dignity of the then declining art of painting, (*de dignitate artis morientis*), shows it to be not only *severe* in respect of the discipline, style, design, but of the characters and lives of the noble masters; not only in the effect, but even in the very materials of



“ knowledge should come to me by accident, or  
 “ in play, I shall be grossly deluded, and prove

the art, the colors, ornaments, and particular circumstances belonging to the profession. — *Exphranoris discipulus Antidotus, diligentior quam numerosior, et in coloribus severus.* — *Niciæ comparatur, et aliquanto præfertur Athenion Maronites, Glaucionis Corinthii discipulus, et austerior colore, et in austeritate jucundior, ut in ipsa pictura eruditio eluceat.* \* \* \* *Quod nisi in juvenia obisset, nemo ei compararetur.* — *Pausiæ et filius et discipulus Aristolaus e severissimis pictoribus fuit.* — *Fuit et nuper gravis ac severus pictor Amulius.* \* \* \* *Paucis diei horis pingebat, id quoque cum gravitate, quod semper togatus, quamquam in machinis.* One of the mortal symptoms upon which *Pliny* pronounces the sure death of this noble art, not long survivor to him, was what belonged in common to all the other perishing arts after the fall of liberty; I mean the luxury of the *Roman* court, and the change of taste and manner naturally consequent to such a change of government and dominion. This excellent, learned, and polite critic, represents to us the false taste springing from the court itself, and from that opulence, splendor, and affectation of magnificence and expense proper to the place. Thus in the statuary and architecture then in vogue, nothing could be admired beside what was costly in the mere matter or substance of the work. Precious rock, rich metal, glittering stones, and other luscious ware, poisonous to art, came every day more into request, and were imposed, as necessary materials, on the best masters. It was in favor of these court-beauties and gaudy appearances, that all good drawing, just design, and truth of work began to be despised. Care was taken to procure from distant parts, the most gorgeous splendid colors, of the most costly growth or composition: not such as had been used by *Apelles* and the great masters, who were justly severe, loyal, and faithful to their art. This newer coloring our critic calls the florid kind. The materials were too rich to be furnished by the painter, but were bespoke or furnished at the cost of the person who employed him (*quos dominus pingenti præstat*); The other he calls the austere kind. And thus, says he, *verum, non animi pretiis excubatur*: “ The cost, and  
 “ not the life and art, is studied.” He shows, on the contrary,



“ myself at best a mock virtuoso, or mere pedant  
“ of the kind.”

Here, therefore, we have once again exhibited our moral science in the same method and manner of Soliloquy as above. To this correction of humor, and formation of a taste, our reading, if it be of the right sort, must principally contribute. Whatever company we keep, or however polite and agreeable their characters may be, with whom we converse or correspond; if the authors we read are of another kind, we shall find our palate strangely turned their way. We are the unhappier in this respect, for being scholars, if our studies be ill chosen. Nor can I, for this reason, think it proper to call a man well-read who reads many authors; since he must of necessity have more ill models than good, and be more stuffed with bombast, ill fancy, and wry thought, than filled with solid sense, and just imagination.

But notwithstanding this hazard of our taste, from a multiplicity of reading, we are not, it seems, the least scrupulous in our choice of subject. We read whatever comes next us. What

what care *Apelles* took to subdue the florid colors, by a darkening varnish; *ut eadem res*, says he, *nimis floridis coloribus austeritatem occulte daret*. And he says just before, of some of the finest pieces of *Apelles*, “ that they were wrought in four colors only.” So great and venerable was Simplicity held among the ancients, and so certain was the ruin of all true elegance in life or art, where this mistress was once quitted or contemned! See *Pliny*, lib. 35. See also, above, p. 124. in the notes; and p. 192.



was first put into our hand, when we were young, serves us afterwards for serious study, and wise research, when we are old. We are many of us indeed so grave, as to continue this exercise of youth through our remaining life. The exercising authors of this kind have been above described<sup>10</sup>, in the beginning of this treatise. The manner of exercise is called meditation, and is of a sort so solemn and profound, that we dare not so much as thoroughly examine the subject on which we are bid to meditate. This is a sort of task-reading, in which a Taste is not permitted. How little soever we take of this diet, it is sufficient to give full exercise to our grave humor, and allay the appetite towards further research, and solid contemplation. The rest is holiday, diversion, play, and fancy. We reject all rule; as thinking it an injury to our diversions, to have regard to truth or nature; without which, however, nothing can be truly agreeable or entertaining, much less instructive or improving. Through a certain surfeit taken in a wrong kind of serious reading, we apply ourselves, with full content, to the most ridiculous<sup>11</sup>. The more remote our pattern is from any thing moral or profitable, the more freedom and satisfaction we find in it. We care not how Gothic or barbarous our models are; what ill-designed or monstrous figures we view; or what false proportions we trace, or see described

<sup>10</sup> Page 142. &c.

<sup>11</sup> *Supra*, p. 59, 60.



in history, romance, or fiction. And thus our eye and ear is lost. Our relish or taste must of necessity grow barbarous, whilst Barbarian customs, savage manners, Indian wars, and wonders of the terra incognita, employ our leisure-hours, and are the chief materials to furnish out a library.

These are in our present days, what books of chivalry were in those of our forefathers. I know not what faith our valiant ancestors may have had in the stories of their giants, their dragons, and St. Georges. But for our faith indeed, as well as our taste, in this other way of reading, I must confess I cannot consider it without astonishment.

It must certainly be something else than incredulity, which fashions the taste and judgment of many gentlemen, whom we hear censured as Atheists, for attempting to philosophize after a newer manner than any known of late. For my own part, I have ever thought this sort of men to be in general more credulous, though after another manner, than the mere vulgar. Besides what I have observed in conversation with the men of this character, I can produce many anathematized authors, who, if they want a true Israelitish faith, can make amends by a Chinese or Indian one. If they are short in Syria or the Palestine, they have their full measure in America or Japan. Histories of Incas or Iroquois, written by friars and missionaries, pirates and renegades, sea-captains and trusty travellers, pass



for authentic records, and are canonical, with the virtuosos of this sort. Though Christian miracles may not so well satisfy them, they dwell with the highest contentment on the prodigies of Moorish and Pagan countries. They have far more pleasure in hearing the monstrous accounts of monstrous men and manners, than the politest and best narrations of the affairs, the governments, and lives of the wisest and most polished people.

It is the same taste which makes us prefer a Turkish History to a Grecian or a Roman, an Ariosto to a Virgil, and a Romance or novel to an Iliad. We have no regard to the character or genius of our author; nor are so far curious, as to observe how able he is in the judgment of facts, or how ingenious in the texture of his lies. For facts unably related, though with the greatest sincerity and good faith, may prove the worse sort of deceit: and mere lies, judiciously composed, can teach us the truth of things, beyond any other manner<sup>12</sup>. But to amuse ourselves with such authors as neither know how to lie, nor tell truth, discovers a Taste, which methinks one should not be apt to envy. Yet so enchanted we are with the travelling memoirs of any casual adventurer, that, be his character or

<sup>12</sup> The greatest of critics says of the greatest poet, when he extols him to the highest, "That above all others he understood how To Lie: Διδάσκει δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος ἢ τὰς ἄλλας ψευδῆ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ." Arist. de poetica, cap. 24.—See vol. 3. misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 6. from the end, in the notes.



genius what it will, we have no sooner turned over a page or two, than we begin to interest ourselves highly in his affairs. No sooner has he taken shipping at the mouth of the Thames, or sent his baggage before him to Gravesend, or Buoy in the Nore, than strait our attention is earnestly taken up. If, in order to his more distant travels, he takes some part of Europe in his way, we can with patience hear of inns and ordinaries, passage-boats and ferries, foul and fair weather, with all the particulars of the author's diet, habit of body, his personal dangers and mischances on land and sea. And thus, full of desire and hope, we accompany him, till he enters on his great scene of action, and begins by the description of some enormous fish or beast. From monstrous brutes he proceeds to yet more monstrous men. For in this race of authors, he is ever completest, and of the first rank, who is able to speak of things the most unnatural and monstrous.

This humor our old tragic poet <sup>23</sup> seems to have discovered. He hit our taste in giving us a Moorish hero, full fraught with prodigy; a wondrous story-teller! but for the attentive part, the poet chose to give it to womankind. What passionate reader of travels, or student in the prodigious sciences, can refuse to pity that fair lady, who fell in love with the miraculous Moor? especially considering with what suitable grace

[ <sup>23</sup> *Shakespeare.*



such a lover could relate the most monstrous adventures, and satisfy the wondering appetite with the most wondrous tales; wherein (says the hero traveller)

*Of antres vast, and deserts idle,  
It was my hint to speak:  
And of the cannibals that each other eat!  
The Anthropophagi! and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These to hear  
Would Desdemona seriously incline.*

Seriously, it was a woful tale! unfit, one would think, to win a tender fair-one. It is true, the poet sufficiently condemns her fancy, and makes her, poor lady! pay dearly for it, in the end. But why, amongst his Greek names, he should have chosen one which denoted the lady superstitious, I cannot imagine; unless, as poets are sometimes prophets too, he should figuratively, under this dark type, have represented to us, that, about a hundred years after his time, the fair sex of this island should, by other monstrous tales, be so seduced, as to turn their favor chiefly on the persons of the tale-tellers, and change their natural inclination for fair, candid, and courteous knights, into a passion for a mysterious race of black enchanters; such as of old were said to creep into houses, and lead captive silly women.

It is certain there is a very great affinity between the passion of superstition, and that of tales. The



love of strange narrations, and the ardent appetite towards unnatural objects, has a near alliance with the like appetite towards the supernatural kind, such as are called prodigious, and of dire omen. For so the mind forbodes, on every such unusual sight or hearing. Fate, destiny, or the anger of heaven, seems denoted, and as it were delineated, by the monstrous birth, the horrid fact, or dire event. For this reason the very persons of such relators or tale-tellers, with a small help of dismal habit, suitable countenance and tone, become sacred and tremendous in the eyes of mortals, who are thus addicted from their youth. The tender virgins, losing their natural softness, assume this tragic passion, of which they are highly susceptible, especially when a suitable kind of eloquence and action attends the character of the narrator. A thousand Desdemonas are then ready to present themselves, and would frankly resign fathers, relations, countrymen, and country itself, to follow the fortunes of a hero of the black tribe.

But whatever monstrous zeal, or superstitious passion, the poet might foretel, either in the gentlemen, ladies, or common people of an after-age; it is certain that as to books, the same Moorish fancy, in its plain and literal sense, prevails strongly at this present time. Monsters and monster-lands were never more in request: and we may often see a philosopher, or a wit, run a tale-gathering in those idle deserts, as familiarly as the silliest woman, or merest boy.

One would imagine, that our philosophical



writers<sup>14</sup>, who pretend to treat of morals, should far outdo mere poets, in recommending virtue,

<sup>14</sup> Considering what has been so often said on this subject of philosophy, learning, and the *sister*-arts, after that ancient model which has since been so much corrupted; it may not be amiss perhaps to hear the confession of one of the greatest and most learned of moderns, upon this head. *Scilicet assensuri isti sunt veteribus sapientibus, poeticam τῆς σεμνοτάτης φιλοσοφίας εἶναι σύνναον, severissimæ philosophiæ contubernalem esse; quos videmus, omni cura morum posthabita, quæ vera philosophia est, in nescio quibus argumentatiunculis, in nugis sophisticis, in puerilibus argutiolis, λωβοῖς denique ῥηματίοις τῆς διαλεκτικῆς, quod sua jam ætate Euphrades Themistius conquerebatur, summam sapientiam ponere! Scilicet facundiæ Persii virile robur, aut recondita illa eruditio eos capiet, quibus pristinam barbariem mordicus retinere, et in antiquitatis totius ignoratione versari, potius videtur esse ac melius, quam possessionem literarum, olim simili socordia extinctarum, memoria vero patrum magno Dei immortalis beneficio in lucem revocatarum ex alta hominum oblivione, sibi vindicare, et pro sua quemque virili posteris asserere! \* \* \* \* Scribit vero Arrianus, sapientissimum senem illum Epictetum impietatis in Deum eos insinulasse, qui in philosophiæ studiis τὴν ἀπασφαλτικὴν δύναμιν, sive sermonis curam tanquam rem levem aspernarentur: quoniam quidem, aiebat vir divinus, ἀσεβὲς ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος τὰς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ χάριτας ἀτιμάζειν. En Germanum philosophum! En vocem auream! Nec minus memorabile Synesii philosophi præstantissimi vaticinium tristi eventu confirmatum, quod multo ante ab ipso est editum, cum rationem studiorum similiter perverti ab æqualibus suis cerneret. Disputans enim contra eos qui ad sanctissimæ theologiæ studia infantiam et sophisticen pro solida eruditione afferrent, fatidicam hanc quasi sortem edidit. Κίνδυνος, inquit, εἰς ἄβυσσόν τινος φλυαρίας ἐμπεσόντας τῆς τῆς διαφθαρῆναι. Periculum est ne hujusmodi homines in abyssum quamdam ineptiarum delapsi penitus corrumpantur. Utinam defuisset huic oraculo fides! Sed profecto, depravationi illi, et hujus scientiarum reginæ, et omnium aliarum, quæ postea accidit, occasionem quidem Gotthorum et Alanorum invasiones*



and representing what was fair and amiable in human actions. One would imagine, that if they turned their eye towards remote countries, (of which they affect so much to speak), they should search for that simplicity of manners, and innocence of behaviour, which has been often known among mere savages; ere they were corrupted by our commerce, and, by sad example, instructed in all kinds of treachery and inhumanity. It would be of advantage to us, to hear the causes of this strange corruption in ourselves, and be made to consider of our deviation from nature, and from that just purity of manners which might be expected, especially from a people so assisted and enlightened by religion. For who would not

*præbuerunt: at causa illius propior ac vera est, ratio studiorum perversa, et in liberalibus disciplinis prava institutio, ac linguarum simul et universæ literaturæ melioris ignoratio. \* \* \* Atque non in eum certe finem viri magni et præcepta et exempla virtutum memoriæ commendata ad posteros transmiserunt, ut ad inanem aurium oblectationem, vel jactationem vanam inutilis eruditionis, ea cognosceremus: verum ut suis nos lucubrationibus excitarent ad effodienda et in actum producenda Recti Honestique semina; quæ cum a natura accepissemus, vitiis tamen circumfusa, et tantum non obruta, sic in nostris animis, nisi cultura melior accedat, latent, quasi in altum quendam scrobem penitus defossa. Huc spectant tot illa volumina quæ de morali disciplina philosophi confecerunt. Tendit eodem et Græcorum Latinorumque poetarum pleraque manus; sed itineribus diversis. Quot sunt enim poetarum genera (sunt autem quamplurima), tot fere diverticula et viarum ambages eo ducentium. If. Casaub. in præfatione com. ad Pers. See above, p. 164. &c. and 178, 179, 180. and 247, 248. and 256. &c. and 291. &c.; and vol. 3. misc. 2. ch. 1. parag. ult. and ibid. ch. 2. parag. 24. and misc. 5. ch. 1. parag. 16. in the notes.*



naturally expect more justice, fidelity, temperance, and honesty, from Christians, than from Mahometans or mere Pagans? But so far are our modern moralists from condemning any unnatural vices, or corrupt manners, whether in our own or foreign climates, that they would have Vice itself appear as natural as Virtue; and, from the worst examples, would represent to us, “That all actions are naturally indifferent; that they have no note or character of good or ill in themselves, but are distinguished by mere Fashion, Law, or arbitrary Decree.” Wonderful philosophy! raised from the dregs of an illiterate mean kind, which was ever despised among the great ancients, and rejected by all men of action or sound erudition; but, in these ages, imperfectly copied from the original, and, with much disadvantage, imitated and assumed, in common, both by devout and indevout attempters in the moral kind.

Should a writer upon music, addressing himself to the students and lovers of the art, declare to them, “That the measure or rule of Harmony was caprice or will, humor or fashion;” it is not very likely he should be heard with great attention, or treated with real gravity. For Harmony is harmony by nature, let men judge ever so ridiculously of music. So is symmetry and proportion founded still in nature, let men’s fancy prove ever so barbarous, or their fashions ever so Gothic in their architecture, sculpture, or whatever other designing art. It is the same case, where life and Manners are concerned. Virtue has the same fixed



standard. The same numbers, harmony, and proportion, will have place in Morals, and are discoverable in the characters and affections of mankind; in which are laid the just foundations of an art and science superior to every other of human practice and comprehension.

This, I suppose therefore, is highly necessary, that a writer should comprehend. For things are stubborn, and will not be as we fancy them, or as the fashion varies, but as they stand in nature. Now, whether the writer be poet, philosopher, or of whatever kind, he is in truth no other than a copist after nature. His style may be differently suited to the different times he lives in, or to the different humor of his age or nation. His manner, his dress, his coloring, may vary. But if his drawing be incorrect, or his design contrary to Nature; his piece will be found ridiculous, when it comes thoroughly to be examined. For Nature will not be mocked. The prepossession against her can never be very lasting. Her decrees and instincts are powerful, and her sentiments inbred. She has a strong party abroad, and as strong a one within ourselves: and when any slight is put upon her, she can soon turn the reproach, and make large reprisals on the taste and judgment of her antagonists.

Whatever philosopher, critic, or author is convinced of this prerogative of Nature, will easily be persuaded to apply himself to the great work of reforming his Taste; which he will have reason to suspect, if he be not such a one as has  
deliberately



deliberately endeavoured to frame it by the just standard of Nature. Whether this be his case, he will easily discover, by appealing to his memory. For custom and fashion are powerful seducers: and he must of necessity have fought hard against these, to have attained that justness of taste, which is required in one who pretends to follow Nature. But if no such conflict can be called to mind, it is a certain token, that the party has his taste very little different from the vulgar. And on this account he should instantly betake himself to the wholesome practice recommended in this treatise. He should set afoot the powerfullest faculties of his mind, and assemble the best forces of his wit and judgment, in order to make a formal descent on the territories of the heart: resolving to decline no combat, nor hearken to any terms, till he had pierced into its inmost provinces, and reached the seat of empire. No treaties should amuse him; no advantages lead him aside. All other speculations should be suspended, all other mysteries resigned, till this necessary campaign was made, and these inward conflicts learned; by which he would be able to gain at least some tolerable insight into himself, and knowledge of his own natural principles.

It may here perhaps be thought, that notwithstanding the particular advice we have given, in relation to the forming of a Taste in natural characters and manners, we are still defective in our performance, whilst we are silent on supernatural cases, and bring not into our consideration



the manners and characters delivered to us in holy writ. But this objection will soon vanish, when we consider, that there can be no rules given by human wit, to that which was never humanly conceived, but divinely dictated and inspired.

For this reason, it would be in vain for any poet<sup>15</sup>, or ingenious author, to form his characters after the models of our sacred penmen. And whatever certain critics may have advanced concerning the structure of a heroic poem of this kind; I will be bold to prophesy, that the success will never be answerable to expectation.

It must be owned, that in our sacred history we have both leaders, conquerors, founders of nations, deliverers, and patriots, who, even in a human sense, are no way behind the chief of those so much celebrated by the ancients. There is nothing in the story of Æneas, which is not equalled or exceeded by a Joshua or a Moses. But as illustrious as are the acts of these sacred chiefs, it would be hard to copy them in just heroic. It would be hard to give to many of them that graceful air, which is necessary to render them naturally pleasing to mankind, according to the idea men are universally found to have of heroism and generosity.

Notwithstanding the pious endeavours which, as devout Christians, we may have used in order to separate ourselves from the interests of mere Heathens and Infidels; notwithstanding the true

<sup>15</sup> Vol. 3. Misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 16. in the notes.



pains we may have taken, to arm our hearts in behalf of a chosen people, against their neighbouring nations, of a false religion and worship; there will be still found such a partiality remaining in us, towards creatures of the same make and figure with ourselves, as will hinder us from viewing with satisfaction the punishments inflicted by human hands on such aliens and idolaters.

In mere poetry, and the pieces of wit and literature, there is a liberty of thought and easiness of humor indulged to us, in which perhaps we are not so well able to contemplate the divine judgments, and see clearly into the justice of those ways, which are declared to be so far from our ways, and above our highest thoughts or understandings. In such a situation of mind, we can hardly endure to see Heathen treated as Heathen, and the faithful made the executioners of the divine wrath. There is a certain perverse humanity in us, which inwardly resists the divine commission, though ever so plainly revealed. The wit of the best poet is not sufficient to reconcile us to the campaign of a Joshua, or the retreat of a Moses, by the assistance of an Egyptian loan. Nor will it be possible, by the muses' art, to make that royal hero appear amiable in human eyes, who found such favor in the eye of Heaven. Such are mere human hearts, that they can hardly find the least sympathy with that only one which had the character of being after the pattern of the Almighty's.

It is apparent therefore, that the manners,



actions, and characters of sacred writ, are in no wise the proper subject of other authors than divines themselves. They are matters incomprehensible in philosophy: they are above the pitch of the mere human historian, the politician, or the moralist; and are too sacred to be submitted to the poet's fancy, when inspired by no other spirit than that of his profane mistresses, the Muses.

I should be unwilling to examine rigorously the performance of our great poet<sup>16</sup>, who sung so piously the fall of man. The war in heaven, and the catastrophe of that original pair from whom the generations of mankind were propagated, are matters so abstrusely revealed, and with such a resemblance of mythology, that they can more easily bear what figurative construction or fantastic turn the poet may think fit to give them. But should he venture further into the lives and characters of the patriarchs, the holy matrons, heroes and heroines of the chosen seed; should he employ the sacred machine, the exhibitions and interventions of divinity, according to holy writ, to support the action of his piece; he would soon find the weakness of his pretended orthodox Muse, and prove how little those divine patterns were capable of human imitation, or of being raised to any other majesty, or sublime, than that in which they originally appear.

The theology, or Theogony, of the Heathens

<sup>16</sup> Milton,



could admit of such different turns and figurative expressions, as suited the fancy and judgment of each philosopher or poet. But the purity of our faith will admit of no such variation. The Christian Theology; the birth, procedure, generation, and personal distinction of the Divinity, are mysteries only to be determined by the initiated, or ordained; to whom the state has assigned the guardianship and promulgation of the divine oracles. It becomes not those who are uninspired from heaven, and uncommissioned from earth, to search with curiosity into the original of those holy rites and records, by law established. Should we make such an attempt, we should in probability find the less satisfaction, the further we presumed to carry our speculations. Having dared once to quit the authority and direction of the law, we should easily be subject to heterodoxy and error, when we had no better warrant left us for the authority of our sacred Symbols, than the integrity, candor, and disinterestedness of their compilers, and registers. How great that candor and disinterestedness may have been, we have no other histories to inform us, than those of their own licensing or composing. But busy persons, who officiously search into these records, are ready even from hence to draw proofs very disadvantageous to the fame and character of this succession of men. And persons moderately read in these histories, are apt to judge no otherwise of the temper of ancient councils, than by that of later synods and modern convocations.



When we add to this the melancholy consideration, of what disturbances have been raised from the disputes of this kind; what effusion of blood, what devastations of provinces, what shock and ruin of empires, have been occasioned by controversies, founded on the nicest distinction of an article relating to these mysteries; it will be judged vain in any poet, or polite author, to think of rendering himself agreeable or entertaining, whilst he makes such subjects as these to be his theme.

But though the explanation of such deep mysteries, and religious duties, be allotted as the peculiar province of the sacred order; it is presumed nevertheless, that it may be lawful for other authors to retain their ancient privilege of instructing mankind, in a way of pleasure and entertainment. Poets may be allowed their fictions, and philosophers their systems. It would go hard with mankind, should the patentees for religion be commissioned for all instruction and advice relating to manners or conversation. The stage may be allowed to instruct, as well as the pulpit. The way of wit and humor may be serviceable, as well as that of gravity and seriousness; and the way of plain reason as well as that of exalted revelation. The main matter is, to keep these provinces distinct, and settle their just boundaries. And on this account it is, that we have endeavoured to represent to modern authors the necessity of making this separation justly, and in due form.

It would be somewhat hard, methinks, if



### Sect 3. ADVICE TO AN AUTHOR. 311

Religion, as by law established<sup>17</sup>, were not allowed the same privilege as Heraldry. It is agreed on all hands, that particular persons may design or paint, in their private capacity, after what manner they think fit. But they must blazon only as the public directs. Their lion or bear must be figured as the science appoints; and their supporters and crest must be such as their wise and gallant ancestors have procured for them. No matter whether the shapes of these animals hold just proportion with nature. No matter though different or contrary forms are joined in one. That which is denied to painters or poets, is permitted to Heralds. Naturalists may, in their separate and distinct capacity, inquire as they think fit, into the real existence and natural truth of things: but they must by no means dispute the authorized forms. Mermaids and griffins were the wonder of our forefathers; and, as such, delivered down to us by the authentic traditions and delineations above-mentioned. We ought not so much as to criticise the features or dimensions of a Saracen's face, brought by our conquering ancestors from the holy wars; nor pretend to call in question the figure or size of a dragon, on which the history of our national champion, and the establishment of a high order, and dignity of the realm, depends.

But as worshipful as are the persons of the illustrious heralds Clarencieux, Garter, and the

<sup>17</sup> Vol. 3. Misc. 2. chap. 2. parag. 13. Misc. 5. chap. 1. parag. 6. and *ibid.* chap. 3. parag. 8. from the end.



rest of those eminent sustainers of British honor and antiquity ; it is to be hoped , that in a more civilized age , such as at present we have the good fortune to live in , they will not attempt to strain their privileges to the same height as formerly. Having been reduced by law , or settled practice , from the power they once enjoyed , they will not , it is presumed , in defiance of the magistrate and civil power , erect anew their stages and lifts , introduce the manner of civil combat , set us to tilt and tournament , and raise again those defiances and mortal frays , of which their order were once the chief managers and promoters.

To conclude : The only method which can justly qualify us for this high privilege of giving Advice , is , in the first place , to receive it ourselves , with due submission , where the public has vouchsafed to give it us , by authority. And if , in our private capacity , we can have resolution enough to criticise ourselves , and call in question our high imaginations , florid desires , and specious sentiments , according to the manner of Soliloquy above-prescribed ; we shall , by the natural course of things , as we grow wiser , prove less conceited ; and introduce into our character that modesty , condescension , and just humanity , which is essential to the success of all friendly counsel and admonition. An honest home-philosophy must teach us the wholesome practice within ourselves. Polite reading , and converse with mankind of the better sort , will qualify us for what remains.



LETTERS

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# LETTERS TO A STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY.

## L E T T E R I.

*Feb. 24. 1706-7.*

**I** ACCEPT kindly the offer of your correspondence, and chiefly, as it comes from you with heartiness, and (the best of characters) Simplicity. When this disposition of heart attends our searches into learning and philosophy, we need not fear being vainly puffed up, or falling into that false way of wisdom, which the scripture calls vain philosophy. When the improvement of our minds, and the advancement of our reason, is all we aim at; and this only to fit us for a perfecter, more rational, and worthier service of God; we can have no scruples, whether or no the work be an acceptable one to him. But where neither our duty to mankind, nor obedience to our Creator, is any way the end or object of our studies or exercises; be they ever so curious or exquisite, they may be justly styled vain: and often the vainer, for carrying with them the false show of excellence and superiority.

On this account, though there be no part of learning more advantageous even towards divinity, than logics, metaphysics, and what we call univer-



fity-learning; yet nothing proves more dangerous to young minds unforwarned, or, what is worse, prepossessed, with the excellency of such learning, as if all wisdom lay in the solution of those riddles of the schoolmen, who, in the last ages of the church, found out an effectual way to destroy religion by philosophy, and render reason and philosophy ridiculous under that garb they had put on it. If your circumstances or condition suffer you to enter into the world by a university, well is it for you that you have prevented such prepossession.

However, I am not sorry, that I lent you Mr Locke's essay of human understanding; which may as well qualify for business and the world, as for the sciences and a university. No one has done more towards the recalling of philosophy from barbarity, into use and practice of the world, and into the company of the better and politer sort; who might well be ashamed of it in its other dress. No one has opened a better or clearer way to reasoning. And above all, I wonder to hear him censured so much by any church-of-England-men, for advancing reason, and bringing the use of it so much into religion; when it is by this only that we fight against the enthusiasts, and repel the great enemies of our church. It is by this weapon alone that we combat those visionaries, who in the last age broke in so foully upon us, and are now (pretendedly at least) esteemed so terrible and dangerous.

But though I am one of those who in these truly happy times esteem our church as wholly out of



danger; yet should we hearken to those men, who disclaim this use of reason in religion, we must lay ourselves open afresh to all fanatics. For what else is Fanaticism? Where does the stress of their cause lie? Are not their unintelligible motions of the Spirit; their inexpressible pretended feelings, apprehensions, and lights within; their inspirations in prophecy, extempore-prayer, preaching, &c.; are not these, I say, the foundations on which they build their cause? Are not our cold-dead reasonings (as they call them) a reproach and stumbling-block to them; if you will believe their leaders, who are instantly cut off from all their pretences to gifts, and spirits, and supernatural graces; if they are once brought to the test of cool reason and deliberate examination? And can we thus give up our cause, by giving up reason? Shall we give them up our Tillotsons, our Barrows, our Chillingworths, our Hammonds? For what less is it to give up this way of reason so much decried by those condemners of Mr Locke? But such is the spirit of some men in controversial matters. A certain noted clergyman of learning and ability, and great reputed zeal, a great enemy of Mr Locke, has (as I am lately told) turned rigid Calvinist, as to all the points of predestination, free grace, &c.; and not only this clergyman, but several more in the university of that high party, who ran as high in opposition to Calvinism, but one reign or two since. The reason of this is but too obvious. Our bishops and dignified churchmen, (the most worthily and justly dignified



of any in any age), are as they ever were, inclinable to moderation in the high Calvinistic points. But they are also inclinable to moderation in other points.

*Hinc illæ lacrymæ.*

They are for toleration, inviolable toleration: as our Queen nobly and Christianly said it, in her speech a year, or two since: and this is itself intolerable with our high gentlemen, who despise the gentleness of their lord and master, and the sweet mild government of our Queen; preferring rather that abominable blasphemous representative of church-power, attended with the worst of temporal governments, as we see it in perfection of each kind in France. From this, and from its abettors of every kind, and in every way, I pray God deliver us, whilst we are duly thankful for what in his providence he has already done towards it, and to the happiness and glory of our excellent Queen and country. So farewell. I am your good friend to serve you,

S\*\*\*\*\*.

## L E T T E R II.

*May 10. 1707.*

SINCE your disposition inclines you so strongly towards university-learning, and your sound exercise of your reason, and the integrity of your



heart, give good assurance against the narrow principles, and contagious manner of those corrupted places, whence all noble and free principles ought rather to be propagated; I shall not be wanting to you on my part, when I shall see the fruit of your studies, life, and conversation, answerable to those good seeds of principles you seem to carry in you.

I am glad to find your love of reason and free thought. Your piety and virtue, I know, you will always keep; especially since your desires and natural inclinations are towards so serious a station in life, which others undertake too slightly, and without examining their hearts.

Pray God direct you, and confirm your good beginnings, in the practice of virtue and religion; assuring yourself, that the highest principle, which is the love of God, is best attained, not by dark speculations and monkish philosophy, but by moral practice, and love of mankind, and a study of their interests: the chief of which, and that which only raises them above the degree of brutes, is freedom of reason in the learned world, and good government and liberty in the civil world. Tyranny in one is ever accompanied, or soon followed, by tyranny in the other. And when slavery is brought upon a people, they are soon reduced to that base and brutal state, both in their understandings and morals.

True zeal therefore, for God or religion, must be supported by real love for mankind: and love of mankind cannot consist but with a right knowledge of man's great interests, and of the only way



and means, that of liberty and freedom, which God and nature has made necessary and essential to his manly dignity and character. They therefore who betray these principles, and the rights of mankind, betray religion, even so as to make it an instrument against itself.

But I must have done, and am your good friend to serve you,

S\*\*\*\*\*.

### L E T T E R III.

Nov. 19. 1707.

**T**RULY, if your heart correspond entirely with your pen, and if you thoroughly feel those good principles you have expressed, I cannot but have a great increase of kindness and esteem for you.

Imagine not, that I suspect you of so mean a thing as hypocrisy or affected virtue; I am fully satisfied you mean and intend what you write. But, alas! the misfortune of youth, and not of youth merely, but of human nature, is such, that it is a thousand times easier to frame the highest ideas of virtue and goodness, than to practise the least part. And perhaps this is one of the chief reasons why virtue is so ill practised; because the impressions which seem so strong at first are too far relied on. We are apt to think, that what appears so fair, and strikes us so forcibly, at the first view, will surely hold with us. We launch forth  
into



into speculation; and after a time, when we look back, and see how slowly practice comes up to it, we are the sooner led to despondency, the higher we had carried our views before.

Remember, therefore, to restrain yourself within due bounds, and to adapt your contemplation to what you are capable of practising. For there is a sort of spiritual ambition: and in reading those truly divine authors whom you have sometimes cited to me, I have observed many to have miscarried by too fervent and eager a pursuit of such perfection.

Glad I am, however, that you are not one of those dull souls, that are incapable of any spiritual refinement. I rejoice to see you raise yourself above the rank of sordid and sensual spirits, who, though set apart and destined to spirituals, understand not that there is any thing preparatory to it, beyond a little scholarship and knowledge of forms. I rejoice to see, that you think of other preparations, and another discipline of the heart and mind, than what is thought of amongst that indolent and supine race of men.

You are sensible, I perceive, that there is another sort of study, a profounder meditation, which becomes those who are to set an example to mankind, and fit themselves to expound and teach those short and summary precepts, and divine laws, delivered to us in positive commands by our sacred Legislator.

It is our business, and of all, as many as are raised in knowledge above the poor, illiterate and



laborious vulgar, to explain, as far as possible, the reasons of those laws; their consent with the law of nature; their suitableness to society, and to the peace, happiness, and enjoyment of ourselves. It is there alone that we have need of recourse to fire and brimstone, and what other punishments the divine goodness, for our good, has condescended to threaten us with, where the force of these arguments cannot prevail.

Our business within ourselves, is to set ourselves free, according to that perfect law of liberty, which we are bid to look into. And I am delighted to read these words from you, viz. that we are made to contemplate and love God entirely, and with a free and voluntary love. But this, you well see, is a mystery too deep for those souls whom you converse with, and see around you. They have scarce heard of what it is to combat with their appetites and senses. They think themselves sufficiently justified, as men: and sufficiently qualified, as holy men, and teachers of Religion; if they can compass matters, by help of circumstances and outward fortune, so as happily to restrain these lusts and appetites of theirs within the bounds of ordinary human laws. Hence those allurements of external objects, as you well remark; they are so far from declining, that they rather raise and advance them by all possible means, without fear of adding fuel to their inflamed desires, in a heart which can never burn towards God, till those other fires are extinct.

God grant, that since you know this better way,



this chaste and holy discipline, you may still pursue it, with that just and pious jealousy over your own heart, that neither your eyes, nor any of your senses, may be led away to serve themselves, or any thing, but that Creator, who made them for his service, and in whom alone is happiness and rest.

I wish you well, and shall be glad to hear still of you.

S\*\*\*\*\*.

#### L E T T E R I V.

*April 2. 1708.*

**I** Have received yours every week, and am highly satisfied with your thoughts; not doubting but they are truly your own and natural, as well as your manner of expressing them: for in this I would have you keep an entire freedom, and deliver your sentiments still nakedly, and without art or ornament. For it is the heart I look for: and though the ornaments of style are what you are obliged to study and practise on other occasions; the less you regard them, and the greater simplicity you discover in writing privately to myself, the greater my satisfaction is, and the more becoming the part you have to act.

I was particularly pleased with your thoughts and reasonings on Christian Liberty, and the zeal you show for that noble principle, by which



we cease to be slaves and drudges in religion ; and, by being reconciled to our duty , and to the excellence of those precepts and injunctions , which tend absolutely to our good and happiness in every respect , we become liberal servants and children of God.

A mind thus released and set at liberty , if it once sees its real good , will hardly be deprived of it, or disheartened in the pursuit, whatever discouragement surrounds it. It is the inward enemy alone can stop it. For when a mind , set free from voluntary error, and self-darkening conceit, aspires to what is generous and deserving ; nothing but what is vile and slavish from within can deaden it: nothing but a base love of inward slavery, and an adherence to our vices and corruptions, is able to effect this.

In some , who are horridly degenerate , this submission is wholly voluntary. Self-interest leads them ; whether it be a private one of their own, or in society and confederacy with some faction or party, to the support of temporal ends. In this case it carries a specious show of public good, whether it be in Church or State. And thus it is often the occasion of an open denial of reason , and of a barefaced opposition to the glorious search of Truth.

In others , it is mere sloth and laziness , or sordid appetite and lust , which , bringing them under the power of sin and ignorance , fits them for political servitude by moral prostitution. For when the tyranny of lust and passion can be indulgently per-



mitted, and even esteemed a happiness; no wonder if liberty of thought be in little esteem. Every thing civil or spiritual of this kind must needs be disregarded, or rather looked upon with jealousy and apprehension.

For one tyranny supports another; one slavery helps and ministers to another. Vice ministers to Superstition; and a gainful ministring she is: Superstition, on the other hand, returns the kindness, and will not be ungrateful. Superstition supports persecution, and persecution superstition.

Vice and intemperance is but an inward persecution. It is here the violence begins. Here truth is first held in unrighteousness, and the *γνῶσόν*, reason, the knowable, the intelligible, the divine part, is persecuted and imprisoned. Those who submit to this tyranny, in time not only come to like it, but plead for it, and think the law of virtue tyrannical and against nature.

So in the absolute governments of the world, nations that submit to arbitrary rule, love even their form of government; if one may call that a form, which is without any, and, like vice itself, knows neither law nor order.

In this state the mind helps forward the ill work. For when Reason, as an antagonist to vice, is become an inward enemy, and has once lost her interest with the soul, by opposing every favorite passion, she will then be soon expelled another province, and lie under suspicion for every attempt she makes upon the mind. She is presently miscalled and abused. She is though notional in the under-



standing, whimsical in company, seditious in the state, heretical in the church. Even in philosophy, her own proper dominions, she is looked upon as none of the best companions: and here also authority is respected as the most convenient guide.

This we find to be the temper of certain places; where wit and sense, however, are not wanting, nor learning of a certain kind. So that what is at the bottom of all this, is easily seen by those who see those places, and can but make use of their eyes, to observe manners and morals.

It is pretty visible indeed, that the original of all is in those sordid vices of sloth, laziness, and intemperance. This makes way for ambition: for how should these be so illustriously maintained and vindicated, without large temporal power, and the umbrage of authority? Hence it is, that those mother-vices are so indulgently treated in those places; and that temperance and virtue are looked upon with an evil eye, as fanatically inclined. For who that is morally free, and has asserted his inward liberty, can see truth thus held, reason and ingenuity suppressed, without some secret abhorrence and detestation?

But this you are happily apprized of; nor can you miscarry, or be turned aside by imposture, or assuming formality and pride of any kind. You know your liberty: use it, and be free. But use it as becomes you; with all due meekness and submission as to outward carriage. It is the inward man that is to be relieved and rescued from his chains. Others need not your admonition: nor is



this your duty ; but far contrary. Preserve yourself from the contagion , and it is enough : a great task it is ; and will appear so to you , if you are hearty in it , and concerned for the thing itself , not the appearance. For the inclination towards rebuke , and rectifying of others , which feels like zeal in us , is often the deceit of pride and self-conceit , which finds this way to screen itself , and manage undiscovered.

Keep your virtue and honesty to yourself : for if it be truly such , it will be in no pain for being kept secret. And thus you may be safe , and in due time , perhaps , useful also to others. Learn to discourse and reason with yourself , or , as you honestly do , in letters to me. Trouble not others ; nor be provoked to show your sentiments , and betray noble and generous truths to such as can neither bear them , nor those whom they suspect to be in possession of them.

Mind that which is the chief of all , liberty : and subdue early your own temper and appetites. It will then be time for higher speculations , when those wandering imaginations , vain conceits , and wanton thoughts of youth , are mortified and subdued. Religion then will have no enemy opposed to her ; and , in spite of superstition , and all spiritual tyrannies of the world , will soon be found a joyful task , the pleasantest of all lives , quite other than as commonly represented.

Look chiefly to this practice : for this is always permitted you. This you can be employed in every hour ; even when books and privacy are



denied you, and business and attendance required. The more you are a servant in this sense, the more you will partake of that chief liberty, which is learned by obedience and submission. And thus even they, who, perhaps, by their haughtiness and harshness, would render you a slave, and awe you into servile thoughts, will most of all contribute to your manumission; if by their sad example they teach you, in meekness still and humility, to detest the more their narrow, persecuting, and bitter spirit, supported by their vices; and show you evidently that great truth, That tyranny can never be exercised but by one who is already a slave.

Be assured, therefore, that where the heart disdains this original corruption, the mind will be its friend; and, by delivering it from all spiritual bondage, will qualify it for a further progress; rewarding virtue by itself. For of Virtue there can be no Reward, but of the same kind with itself: nothing can be superadded to it. And even heaven itself can be no other, than the addition of grace to grace, virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge; by which we may still more and more comprehend the chief Virtue, and highest excellence, the giver and dispenser of All: to whom I commit you; and pray your studies may be effectual. So farewell.



## L E T T E R V.

*January 28. 1708-9.*

**I** Was that morning thinking with myself what was become of you ; and almost resolved to have you inquired of at your father's , when I received your very surprising letter , which brought so good an account of yourself , and a proof how well you had spent your time during this your long silence.

It was providential , surely , that I should happen once to speak to you of the Greek language , when you asked concerning the foundations of learning , and the source and fountain of those lights we have , whether in morality or divinity. It was not possible for me to answer you deceitfully or slightly. I could not but point out to you where the spring-head lay. But as well as I can remember , I bade you not be discouraged : for by other channels , derived from those fountains , you would be sufficiently supplied with the knowledge necessary for the solemn character that lay before you.

You hearkened to me , it seems , with great attention and belief ; and did resolve to take no middle way. But little could I have thought , that you dared to have made your attempt on the other side , instead of drawing in your forces , and collecting your strength , and the remainder of your precious time , for what lay on this hither side.



But since God would have it so ; so be it : and I pray God prosper you in your daring attempt, and bless you with true modesty and simplicity in all the other endeavours and practices of your life, as you have had courage and mighty boldness in this one.

And so indeed it may naturally happen by the same good providence ; since at the instant that you began this enterprize, you have fallen into such excellent reading : and if, as you show by your letter, Simplicius's Comment be your delight ; even that alone is a sufficient earnest of your soul's improvement, as well as of your mind's ; if such a distinction may well be made : for, alas ! all that we call improvement of our minds, in dry and empty speculation ; all learning, or whatever else, either in theology, or other science, which has not a direct tendency to render us honester, milder, juster, and better, is far from being justly so called. And even all that philosophy which is built on the comparison and compounding of ideas, complex, implex, reflex, and all that din and noise of metaphysics ; all that pretended study and science of nature called natural philosophy, Aristotelian, Cartesian, or whatever else it be ; all those high contemplations of stars, and spheres, and planets ; and all the other inquisitive, curious parts of learning ; are so far from being necessary improvements of the mind, that, without the utmost care, they serve only to blow it up in conceit and folly, and render men more stiff in their ignorance and vices.



And this brings into my thoughts a small piece of true learning, which I think is generally bound up with Simplicius and Epictetus. It is the table, or picture, of Cebes the Socratic, and elder disciple of Plato. This golden piece I would have you study, and have by heart; the Greek too being pure and excellent. And by this picture you will better understand my hint, and know the true learning from that which falsely passes under the name of wisdom and science.

As for the divine Plato, I would not wish you as yet to go beyond a dialogue or two; and let those be the first and second Alcibiades. For now I will direct and assist you all I can, that you may gradually proceed, and not meet with stumbling-blocks in your way, or what, instead of forwarding, may retard you.

Read these pieces again and again. Suspend for a while the reading of Epictetus: and read of Marcus Antoninus only what you perfectly understand. Look into no commentator; though he has two very learned ones, Gataker, and Casaubon: and by no means study, or so much as think on any of the passages that create any difficulty or hesitation: but, as I tell you, keep to the plain and easy passages, which you may mark or write out, and so use on occasion as you walk or go about. For I reckon you are a good improver of your time, and that you manage every moment to advantage, else you could never have thus suddenly advanced so far as you have done.



But, in this case, you must take care of your health, by moving and using exercise; which makes me speak of walking. For the mind must suffer, in some sense, when the body does. And students, who are over eager, and neglect this duty, hurt both their health and temper. The latter of which has a sad influence on their minds; and makes them, like ill vessels, pour whatever is put into them, though of ever so good a kind. For never do we more need a just cheerfulness, good humor, or alacrity of mind, than when we are contemplating God and Virtue. So that it may be assigned as one cause of the austerity and harshness of some men's divinity, that in their habit of mind, and by that very morose and sour temper which they contract with their hard studies, they make the idea of God so much after the pattern of their own bitter spirit.

But, as I was saying concerning your progress it is better for you to read in a small compass what is good and excellent, and of easy conception, without stop or difficulty as to the speculation, than to read much in many.

And having thus confined you as to three of your authors mentioned, and set your bounds; I proceed to the fourth, which is Lucian, whom, for a very different reason, I would have you also read but here and there. For though he is one of the politest writers of the latter age, he only has set himself out like the jay in the fable, with the spoils of those excellent and divine works by way of dialogue, (which was the way that



anciently all the philosophers wrote in), most of which works are now lost and perished: and I fear the true reason why Lucian was preserved, instead of any of the other, was, because of the envy of the Christian church, which soon began to be so corrupt; and finding this author to be so truly profane, and a scoffer of his own, and all religions, they were contented to bear his immorality and dissolute style and manners, only for the satisfaction of seeing the Heathen religion ridiculed by a Heathen, and the good and pious writers, unjustly styled profane, most monstrously abused by a wretch, who was truly the most profane and impious; and who, at the same time, even in the pieces that are left of him in the same book, treats both Moses and our Saviour, and the whole Christian religion, as contemptibly as he does his own. Therefore, as his dialogues of his courtesans are horridly vicious and licentious, and against all good manners; and as his dialogues of the gods are mere buffoonery, and his abuse of Plato, Socrates, and the rest of those divine Heathens, as unjust and wicked, as really they are mean and ridiculous; I would not by any means have you to learn Greek at such a cost. There are some dialogues bound up, which are not of Lucian's; and these are the best. One concerning the Cynics, whom he elsewhere so abuses, is of that number, as I take it: and some pleasant treatises there are besides, all in pure Greek.

But here is the great and essential matter of the last consequence to our souls and minds, to keep



them from the contagion of pleasure. And to show you, that I am not by this an imitator of the severe ascetic, monastic race of divines, or an admirer of any thing that looks like restraint in knowledge, or learning, or speculation; consider of this that I am going to say to you; and carry your reflection as far back as to that first little glimmering of ingenuity which showed itself in you in your childhood; I mean the art of painting. Had you been to have made one of those artists of the nobler kind, who paint history, and actions, and nature; and had you been sent by me into Italy, or elsewhere, to learn the style and manner of the great masters; what advice, think you, should I have given you? I say, what advice? not as a Christian, or philosopher, or man of virtue; but merely as a lover of the art; supposing I had ever been of a very vicious life, and had had no other end in sending you abroad, than to have procured pictures, and have got you a masterly hand in that kind, and to have employed it afterwards for my own use, and for the ornament of my house: most certainly my advice must have been this, and thus any other master or patron of common sense would have accosted you.

“ You are now going to learn what is excellent  
“ and beautiful in the way of painting. You will  
“ go where there are many pictures of many dif-  
“ ferent hands, and quite contrary in their manner  
“ and style. You will find many judges of differ-  
“ ent opinions; and the worst masters, the worst  
“ pieces, the worst styles and manners, will have  
“ their admirers. How is it you should form your



“ relish? By what means shall you come to have  
“ a right admiration yourself, and praise and imi-  
“ tate only what is truly exquisite and good in the  
“ kind? If you follow your sudden fancy and  
“ bent; if you fix your eye on that which most  
“ strikes and pleases you at the first sight; you  
“ will most certainly never come to have a good  
“ eye at all. You will be led aside, and have a  
“ florid, gay, foolish fancy; and any lewd tawdry  
“ piece of daubing will make a stronger impression  
“ on you, than the most majestic chaste piece of  
“ the soberest master; and a Flemish or a French  
“ manner will more prevail with you, than a true  
“ Italian.

“ How shall we do then in this case? — Why  
“ even thus: for what way is there else? Make  
“ it a solemn rule to yourself, to check your own  
“ eye and fancy, which naturally leads to gaiety;  
“ and turn it strongly on that which it cares not  
“ at first to dwell upon. Be sure that you pass by,  
“ on every occasion, whatever little, idle piece of a  
“ negligent, loose kind may be apt to detain your  
“ eye; and fix yourself upon the nobler, more  
“ masterly, and studied pieces of such as were  
“ known Virtuofos, and admired by all such.  
“ If you find no grace or charm at the first look-  
“ ing, look on; continue to observe all that you  
“ possibly can: and when you have got one glimpse,  
“ improve it; copy it; cultivate the idea; and labor,  
“ till you have worked yourself into a right  
“ Taste, and formed a relish and understanding  
“ of what is truly beautiful in the kind.”

This is what any ordinary master or patron of



common good sense would have said to you, upon your enterprise on painting; and this is what I now say to you on your great enterprise on Knowledge and Learning. This is the reason I cry out to you against pleasure; to beware of those paths which lead to a wrong knowledge, a wrong judgment of what is supremely Beautiful and Good.

Your endeavour and hope is to know God and goodness, in which alone there is true enjoyment and good. The way to this is not to put out your eyes, or hoodwink yourself, or lie in the dark, expecting to see visions. No, you need not apologize for yourself, (as you do), for desiring to read Origen, the good father, and best of all those they call so. You shall not only, by my consent, read Origen, but even Celsus himself, who was a Heathen, and writ zealously against the Christians, whom Origen defends. So far am I from bidding you fly heretical, or Heathen books, where good manners, honesty, and fair reason show themselves: But where vice, ill manners, abusive wit, and buffoonery appear, the prejudice is just: pronounce against such authors; fly them, and condemn them.

Preserve yourself, and keep your eye and judgment clear. But if the eye be not open to all fair and handsome spectacles, how should you learn what is fair and handsome? You would praise God: but how would you praise him? and for what? Know you as yet what true excellence is? the attributes, as you call them, which you have learned in your catechism, or in the higher schools of the schoolmen and divines; the attributes, I say, of



of Justice, Goodness, Wisdom, and the like, are they really understood by you? or do you talk of these by rote? If so, what is this but giving words to God, not praise, nor honor, nor glory? If the Apostle appeals to whatsoever is lovely, whatsoever is honest, (or comely), whatsoever is virtuous, or praise-worthiness; how shall we understand his appeal, till we have studied? — Or do we know these things from our cradles? For since we were men, we never vouchsafed to inquire: but took for granted that we were knowing in the matter: which yet, without philosophy, it is impossible we should be. So that when, without philosophy, we make use of these high terms, and praise God in these philosophical characters; we may be very good, and pious, and well-meaning; but indeed we are little better than parrots in devotion.

To return therefore to the picture, and the advice I am to give you in your study of that great and masterly hand which has drawn all things, and exhibited this great master-piece of Nature, this world or universe: The first thing is, that you prepare and clear your sight; that your eye be simple, pure, uncorrupted, and ready and fit to receive that light which is to shine into it. This is done by virtue, meekness, modesty, sincerity. And way being thus made, your resolution standing towards Truth, and you being conscious to yourself, that, whilst you seek truth, you cannot offend the God of truth; be not afraid of viewing all, and comparing all. For, without comparison of the false with the true, of the ugly with the beautiful, of the dark



and obscure with the bright and shining, we can measure nothing, nor apprehend any thing that is excellent. We may be as well Pagan, Heathen, Turk, or any thing else; if, being at Constantinople, Ispahan, or wherever the seat of any great empire is, we refuse to look on Christian authors, or hear their sober apologists, as being contrary to the history imposed on us, with an utter destruction and cancelling of all other history or philosophy whatsoever.

But this fear being set aside, which is so wholly unworthy of God, and so debasing to his standard of reason, which he has placed in us; our next concern is to look impartially into all authors, and upon all nations, and into all parts of learning and human life; to seek and find out the true pulchrum, the honestum, the καλόν: by which standard and measure we may know God; and know how to praise him, when we have learned what is praiseworthy.

Be this your search, and by these means, and by this way I have shown you. Seek for the καλόν in every thing, beginning as low as the plants, the fields, or even the common arts of mankind; to see what is beauteous, and what contrary. Thus, and by the original fountains you are arrived to, you will, under Providence, attain beauty and true wisdom for yourself, being true to virtue: and so God prosper you.

S\*\*\*\*\*.



## L E T T E R V I.

*February 8. 1709.*

**I** Commend your honest liberty; and therefore, in the use of it, recommend to you the pursuit of the same thoughts, that you have so honestly and naturally grafted upon the stock afforded you: to which God grant a true life and increase.

Time will be, when your greatest disturbance will arise from that ancient difficulty, Πόθεν τὸ κακόν. But when you have well inured yourself to the precepts and speculation, which give the view of its noble contrary (τὸ καλόν), you will rest satisfied. But be persuaded, in the mean time, that wisdom is more from the heart, than from the head. Feel goodness, and you will see all things fair and good.

Let it be your chief endeavour to make acquaintance with what is good; that by seeing perfectly, by the help of reason, what good is, and what ill, you may prove whether that which is from revelation, be not perfectly good, and conformable to this standard. For if so, the very end of the gospel proves its truth. And that which to the vulgar is only knowable by miracles, and teachable by positive precepts and commands, to the wise and virtuous, is demonstrable by the nature of the thing. So that how can we forbear to give our assent to those doctrines, and that revelation, which



is delivered to us, and enforced by miracles and wonders? But to us, the very test and proof of the divineness and truth of that revelation, is from the excellence of the things revealed: otherwise the wonders themselves would have little effect or power: nor could they be thoroughly depended on, were we even as near to them, as those who lived more than a thousand years since, when they were freshly wrought, and strong in the memory of men. This is what alone can justify our easiness of faith: and in this respect we can never be too resigned, too willing, or too complaisant.

Mean while let your eye be simple; and turn it from the *ἀθεόν* to the *θεόν*. View God in goodness, and in his works, which have that character. Dwell with honesty, and beauty, and order: study and love what is of this kind; and in time you will know and love the Author. Farewel.

## L E T T E R V I I.

May 5. 1709.

**I** Am mightily satisfied with your writing to me as you do: pray continue.

I like your judgment and thoughts on the books you mention. The Bishop of Salisbury's exposition of the articles is, no doubt, highly worthy of your study. None can better explain the sense of the church, than one, who is the greatest pillar of it since the first founders; one, who best explained



and asserted the reformation itself; was chiefly instrumental in saving it from Popery before and at the revolution; and is now the truest example of laborious, primitive, pious, and learned Episcopacy. The antidote indeed, recommended to you, was very absurd, as you remark yourself; and pray have little to do with controversy of any sort.

Chillingworth against Popery, is sufficient reading for you, and will teach you the best manner of that polemic divinity. It is enough to read what is good: and what you find bad, lay aside. The good you read will be a sufficient prevention and anticipation against any evil, that may chance come across you imperceptibly. Fill yourself with good; and you will carry within you sufficient answer to the bad; and, by a sort of instinct, soon discern the one from the other.

Trust your own heart whilst you keep it honest, and can lift it up to the God of truth, as seeking that, and that only. But keep yourself from wrangling, and a controversial spirit: for more harm is taken by a fierce, sour answer to an ill book, than from the book itself, be it ever so ill. Therefore remember, I charge you, to avoid controversial writers.

If the ancients, in their purity, are as yet out of your reach, search the moderns, that are nearest to them. If you cannot converse with the most ancient, use the most modern. For the authors of the middle age, and all that sort of philosophy, as well as divinity, will be of little advantage to you. Gain the purity of the English, your own tongue; and



read whatever is esteemed polite or well writ, that comes abroad. You may give me an account of this.

Mean while I am glad you read those modern divines of our nation, who lived in this age, and were remarkable for moderation, and the Christian principle of charity and toleration.

Do as your genius directs you: and if you are virtuous and good, your genius will guide you right. But whatever it be, either ancient or modern, that you chuse or read; or however you change your opinion or course of study; communicate, and you shall be heard willingly, and advised the best I am able.

I think your genius has dictated right to you about a little pamphlet, which, it seems, is commonly sold with the reflections lately writ upon it; which, if short, I would not for once debar you from, but have you hear what is said in answer, lest you should seem to yourself mistaken or diffident as to the truth. For my own part, I cannot but think from my heart, that the author of the pamphlet, (whatever air of humor he may give himself, the better to take with the polite world), is most sincere to virtue and religion and even to the interest of our church. For many of our modern asserters of toleration have seemed to leave us destitute of what he calls a public leading, or ministry; which notion he treats as mere enthusiasm, or horrid irreligion. For, in truth, religion cannot be left thus to shift for itself, without the care and countenance of the magistrate. But in the



remarks, or reflections, I find the answerers are so far from understanding this plain sense of a leading, that they think it means only leading by the nose. So excellent are these gentlemen at improving ridicule against themselves. They care not who defends religion, or how it is defended, if it be not in their way. They cry out upon a deluge of scepticism breaking out and overwhelming us, in this witty, knowing age; and yet they will allow no remedy proper in the case, no application to the world in a more genteel, polite, open, and free way. They for their parts (witness Dr A—y against the good Mr. H—y) have asserted virtue upon baser principles, and more false and destructive by far, than Epicurus, Democritus, Aristippus, or any of the ancient Atheists. They have subverted all morality, all grounds of honesty, and supplanted the whole doctrine of our Saviour, under pretence of magnifying his revelation. In philosophy they give up all foundations, all principles of society, and the very best arguments to prove the being of a Deity. And, by the way, this pamphlet, which they are so offended at, is so strong on this head, that the author asserts the Deity even on the foundations of his innate idea, and the power of this notion even over Atheists themselves, and by the very concession of Epicurus and that sect. — But no more now. Continue to inform me of your reading of new books: and God be with you.



## L E T T E R V I I I.

*June 3. 1709.*

**I** Received yours since your recovery, which I am glad to hear of. The new book you have discovered, and the account of it gave me great satisfaction. Your conjectures of it perhaps are not amiss. Dr. Tindal's principles, whatever they may be as to church-government, are, in respect of philosophy and theology, far wide from the authors of the rhapsody.

In general, truly, it has happened, that all those they call free writers now-a-days, have espoused those principles which Mr Hobbes set afoot in this last age. Mr Locke, as much as I honor him on account of other writings, (viz. on government, policy, trade, coin, education, toleration, &c.), and as well as I knew him, and can answer for his sincerity as a most zealous Christian and believer, did, however, go in the self-same track, and is followed by the Tindals, and all the other ingenious free authors of our time.

It was Mr Locke that struck the home blow: for Mr Hobbes's character and base slavish principles in government took off the poison of his philosophy. It was Mr Locke that struck at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world, and made the very ideas of these (which are the same



as those of God) unnatural, and without foundation in our minds. Innate is a word he poorly plays upon: the right word, though less used, is connatural. For what has birth or progress of the foetus out of the womb to do in this case? The question is not about the time the ideas entered, or the moment that one body came out of the other: but whether the constitution of man be such, that, being adult and grown up, at such or such a time, sooner or later, (no matter when), the idea and sense of order, administration, and a God, will not infallibly, inevitably, necessarily spring up in him?

Then comes the credulous Mr Locke, with his Indian, barbarian stories of wild nations, that have no such idea, (as travellers, learned authors! and men of truth! and great philosophers! have informed him); not considering, that this is but a negative upon a hearsay, and so circumstantiated, that the faith of the Indian denier may be as well questioned, as the veracity or judgment of the relater, who cannot be supposed to know sufficiently the mysteries and secrets of those barbarians; whose language they but imperfectly know; to whom we good Christians have, by our little mercy, given sufficient reason to conceal many secrets from us; as we know particularly in respect of simples and vegetables: of which, though we got the Peruvian bark, and some other noble remedies; yet it is certain, that, through the cruelty of the Spaniards, as they have owned themselves, many secrets in medicinal affairs have been suppressed.

But Mr Locke, who had more faith, and was



more learned in modern wonder-writers, than in ancient philosophy, gave up an argument for the Deity, which Cicero (though a professed sceptic) would not explode; and which even the chief of the Atheistic philosophers anciently acknowledged, and solved only by their “*primus in orbe deos fecit timor.*”

Thus virtue, according to Mr Locke, has no other measure, law, or rule, than fashion and custom: morality, justice, equity, depend only on law and will: and God indeed is a perfect free agent in his sense; that is, free to any thing, that is, however, ill: for if he wills it, it will be made good; virtue may be vice, and vice virtue in its turn, if he pleases. And thus neither right nor wrong, virtue nor vice, are any thing in themselves; nor is there any trace or idea of them naturally imprinted on human minds. Experience and our catechism teach us all! I suppose it is something of like kind, which teaches birds their nests, and how to fly the minute they have full feathers. Your Theocles, whom you commend so much, laughs at this; and, as modestly as he can, asks a Lockist, whether the idea of woman (and what is sought after in woman) be not taught also by some catechism, and dictated to the man. Perhaps, if we had no schools of Venus, nor such horrid lewd books, or lewd companions, we might have no understanding of this, till we were taught by our parents: and if the tradition should happen to be lost, the race of mankind might perish in a sober nation. — This is very poor philosophy. But the



gibberish of the schools, for these several centuries, has, in those latter days of liberty, made any contrary philosophy of good relish, and highly favourable with all men of wit; such as have been emancipated from that egregious form of intellectual bondage. But I see you are on a better scent —

I can say no more at present: only I would not have you inquire further, as yet, after that book, entitled, *An inquiry*: because it was an imperfect thing, brought into the world many years since, contrary to the author's design, in his absence beyond sea, and in a disguised disordered style. It may one day perhaps be set righter; since other things have made it to be inquired after. Have patience in the mean while, and continue your studies. Dispute with no body on any subject. Keep your remarks to yourself; and cultivate the good maxims and principles you have received. Be humble in all your manners, gesture, and behaviour: for that chiefly suits with the character designed. God guide you in all true piety, moderation, and virtue. Farewel.

## L E T T E R I X.

*December 30. 1709.*

**I** Heartily approved your method and design, and continue to do so. Get what you can of the Greek language: it is the fountain of all; not only of polite learning and philosophy but of divinity



also, as being the language of our sacred oracles. For even the Old Testament is in its best and truest language in the Septuagint. All that you can get of leisure from other exercise, and the required school-learning, apply to Greek.

The few good books of our divines and moralists, which you have discovered by your own sagacity, will serve you both for language and thought.

Dr. More's Enchiridion Ethicum is a right good piece of sound morals; though the Doctor himself, in other English pieces, could not abide by it; but made different excursions into other regions, and was perhaps as great an enthusiast as any of those whom he wrote against. However, he was a learned and a good man.

Remember my former cautions and recommendations: and endeavour above all things to avoid the conceit and pride, which is almost naturally inherent to the function and calling you are about to undertake. And since we think fit to call it priesthood, see that it be of such a kind, as may not make you say or think of yourself in the presence of another, that you are holier than he. It is a solemn part; but see and beware, that the solemnity do not abuse you. And remember, that He whom you own to be your master and legislator, made no laws relating to civil power, or interfering with it. So that all the pre-eminence, wealth, or pension, which you receive, or expect to receive, by help of this assumed character, is from the public, whence both the authority and profit is derived; and on which it legally depends;



all other pretensions of priests being Jewish and Heathenish, and in our state seditious, disloyal, and factious; such as is that spirit which now reigns in our universities, and where the high-churchmen (as they are called) are prevalent. But to this, thank God! our parliament, interposing at this instant, gives a check, by proceeding against Dr. S—l, and advancing Mr. H—y, of whom I have often spoke to you.

No more now, but God bless your studies and endeavours. Never was more need of a spirit of moderation and Christianity among those who are entering on the ministerial function; since the contrary spirit has possessed almost the whole priesthood, beyond all former fanatics. God send you all true Christianity, with that temper, life, and manners, which become it. Farewel.

## L E T T E R X.

*July 10. 1710.*

**I** Believed indeed, it was your expecting me every day at \*\*\*, that prevented your writing, since you received orders from the good Bishop, my Lord of Salisbury; who, as he has done more than any man living, for the good and honor of the church of England, and the reformed religion; so he now suffers more than any man from the tongues and slander of those ungrateful churchmen;



who may well call themselves by that single term of distinction, having no claim to that of Christianity or Protestant; since they have thrown off all the temper of the former, and all concern or interest with the latter.

I hope whatever advice the great and good bishop gave you, will sink deeply into your mind; and that your receiving orders from the hands of so worthy a prelate, will be one of the circumstances which may help to insure your steadiness in honesty, good principles, moderation, and true Christianity; which are now set at nought, and at defiance, by the far greater part and numbers of that body of clergy called the church of England; who no more esteem themselves a Protestant church, or in union with those of Protestant communion, though they pretend to the name of Christian, and would have us judge of the spirit of Christianity from theirs; which God prevent! lest good men should in time forsake Christianity through their means.

As for my part of kindness and friendship to you, I shall be sufficiently recompensed, if you prove, as you have ever promised, a virtuous, pious, sober, and studious man, as becomes the solemn charge belonging to you. But you have been brought into the world, and come into orders, in the worst time for insolence, riot, pride, and presumption of clergymen, that I ever knew, or have read of; though I have searched far into the characters of high-churchmen from the first centuries, in which they grew to



be dignified with crowns and purple, to the late times of our reformation, and to our present age.

The thorough knowledge you have had of me, and the direction of all my studies and life to the promotion of religion, virtue, and the good of mankind, will, I hope, be of some good example to you: at least it will be a hindrance to your being seduced by infamies and calumnies, such as are thrown upon the men called moderate, and, in their style, indifferent in religion, heterodox, and heretical.

I pray God to bless you in your new function, with all the true virtue, humility, moderation, and meekness, which becomes it. I am your hearty friend.

S\*\*\*\*\*.



LETTERS to Robert Molesworth, Esq; afterwards the Lord Viscount of that name; with two Letters written by the late Sir John Cropley.

L E T T E R I.

*Dear SIR,*

*Chelsea, Sept. 30. 1708.*

TWO reasons have made me delay answering yours. I was in hopes of seeing our great Lord; and I depended on Mr. Micklethwayt's presenting you with my services, and informing you of all matters public and private. The Queen is but just come to Kensington, and my Lord<sup>1</sup> to town. He promised to send me word, and appoint me a time, when he came. But I should have prevented him, had it been my weather for town-visits. But having owed the recovery of my health, to the method I have taken of avoiding the town-smoke; I am kept at a distance, and like to be removed even from hence in a little while; though I have a project of staying longer here than my usual time, by removing now and then cross the water, to my friend Sir John Cropley's in Surrey, where my riding and airing recruits me. I am highly rejoiced, as you may believe, that I can find

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Godolphin, then Lord Treasurer.

myself



myself able to do a little more public service, than what of late years I have been confined to in my country: and I own the circumstances of a court were never so inviting to me, as they have been since a late view I have had of the best part of our ministry. It may perhaps have added more of confidence and forwardness in my way of courtship, to be so incapacitated as I am from taking any thing there for myself. But I hope I may convince some persons, that it is possible to serve disinterestedly; and that obligations already received, though on the account of others, are able to bind as strongly as the ties of self-interest.

I had resolved to stay, till I had one conference more with our Lord <sup>2</sup> before I writ to you: but a letter which I have this moment received from Mr. Micklethwayt, on his having waited on you in the country, has made me resolve to write thus hastily, without missing to-night's post, to acknowledge, in the friendliest and freest manner, the kind and friendly part you have taken in my private interests. If I have ever endured any thing for the public, or sacrificed any of my youth, or pleasures, or interests to it, I find it is made up to me in the good opinion of some few: and perhaps one such friendship as yours may counter-balance all the malice of my worst enemies. It is true, what I once told you I had determined with myself, never to think of the continuance of a

<sup>2</sup> The Earl of Godolphin.



family, or altering the condition of life that was most agreeable to me, whilst I had (as I thought) a just excuse; but that of late I had yielded to my friends, and allowed them to dispose of me, if they thought, that, by this means, I could add any thing to the power or interest I had, to serve them or my country. I was afraid, however, that I should be so heavy and inactive in this affair, that my friends would hardly take me to be in earnest. But though it be so lately that I have taken my resolution, and that you were one of the first who knew it, I have on a sudden such an affair thrown across me, that I am confident I have zeal enough raised in me, to hinder you from doubting whether I sincerely intend what I profess. There is a lady, whom chance has thrown into my neighbourhood, and whom I never saw till the Sunday before last, who is in every respect that very person I had ever framed a picture of from my imagination, when I wished the best for my own happiness in such a circumstance. I had heard her character before, and her education, and every circumstance besides suited exactly, all but her fortune. Had she but a ten thousand pounds, my modesty would allow me to apply without reserve, where it was proper. And I would it were in my power, without injury to the lady, to have her upon those terms, or lower. I flatter myself too by all appearance, that the father has long had, and yet retains, some regard for me; and that the disappointments he has had in some higher friendships,



may make him look as low as on me, and imagine me not wholly unworthy of his relation. But if, by any interest I had, or could possibly make with the father, I should induce him to bestow his daughter, perhaps with much less fortune (since I would gladly accept her so) than what in other places he would have bestowed, I shall draw a double misfortune on the lady; unless she has goodness enough to think, that one who seeks her for what he counts better than a fortune, may possibly, by his worth or virtue, make her sufficient amends. And were I but encouraged to hope or fancy this, I would begin my offers tomorrow; and should have greater hopes, that my disinterestedness would be of some service to me in this place, as matters stand.

You see my scruple; and being used to me, and knowing my odd temper, (for I well know you believe it no affectation), you may be able to relieve me, and have the means in your hands: for a few words with one who has the honor to be your relation, would resolve me in this affair. I cannot stir in it till then; and should be more afraid of my good fortune than my bad, if it should happen to me to prevail with a father, for whom the lady has so true a duty, that, even against her inclination, she would comply with any thing he required. I am afraid it will be impossible for you to read or make sense of what I write thus hastily: but I fancy with myself, I make you the greater confidence, in trusting to my humor and first thought, without staying



till I have so much as formed a reflection. I am sure there is hardly any one besides you I should lay myself thus open to; but I am secure in your friendship, which I rely on for advice in this affair. I beg to hear from you in answer by the first post, being, with great sincerity,

*Your faithful friend,*

*and humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

## L E T T E R II.

*Dear SIR,      Beachworth in Surrey, Oct. 12. 1708.*

FROM the hour I had writ you that hasty letter from Chelsea, I was in pain till I had heard from you; and could not but often wish, I had not writ in that hurry and confusion. But since I have received yours in answer, I have all the satisfaction imaginable. I see so sincere a return of friendship, that it cannot any more concern me to have laid myself so open.

I would have a friend see me at the worst: and it is a satisfaction to find, that if one's failures or weaknesses were greater than really they are, one should still be cherished, and be supplied even with good sentiments and discretion, when they were wanting. One thing only I beg you would take notice of, that I had never any thoughts of applying to the young lady, before I applied to the father. My morals are a little too strict to let



me have taken such an advantage, had it been ever so fairly offered. But my drift was, to learn whether there had been an inclination to any one before me; for many offers had been, and some I know very great, within these few months. And though the duty of the daughter might have acquiesced in the dislike of the father, so as not to show any discontent; yet there might be something of this lying at the heart, and so strongly, that my application and success (if I had any) might be looked on with an ill eye, and cause a real trouble. This would have caused it, I am sure, in me; when I should have come, perhaps too late, to have discovered it. But there is nothing of this in the case, by all that I can judge or learn. Never did I hear of a creature so perfectly resigned to duty, so innocent in herself, and so contented under those means which have kept and still keep her so innocent, as to the vanities and vices of the world, though with real good parts, and improvement of them at home: for of this my Lord has wisely and handsomely taken care. Never was any thing so unfortunate for me, as that she should be such a fortune: for that I know is what every body will like, and I perhaps have the worst relish of, and least deserve. The other qualities I should prize more than any, and the generality of mankind, instead of prizing, would be apt to contemn: for want of air and humor, and the wit of general conversation, and the knowledge of the town, and fashions, and diversions, are unpardonable dulnesses in young



wives; who are taken more as companions of pleasure, and to be shown abroad as beauties in the world, than to raise families, and support the honor and interest of those they are joined to.

But to show you that I am not wanting to myself, since your encouraging and advising letter, I have begun my application, by what you well call the right end<sup>1</sup>. You shall hear with what success as soon as I know myself. I could both be bolder and abler in the management of the affair, and could promise myself sure success, had I but a constitution that would let me act for myself; and bustle in and about that town, which, by this winter-season coming on so fiercely, is by this time in such a cloud of smoke, that I can neither be in it, nor near it. I staid but a day or two too long at Chelsea, after the setting in of these east and north-east winds, and I had like to have fallen into one of my short-breathing fits, which would have ruined me. But by flying hither, and keeping my distance, I keep my health; but I may well fear shall lose my mistress. For who ever courted at this rate? Did matters lie so as to the fortune, that I could be the obliging side, it might go on with tolerable grace: and so I fear it must be, whenever I marry, or else am like to remain a bachelor.

However, you can never any more arraign my morals after this. You can never charge me, as

<sup>1</sup> The father.



you have done, for a remissness and laziness, or an indulgence to my own ways, and love of retirement, which, as you thought, might have made me averse to undertake the part of wife and children, though my country or friends ever so much required it of me. You see it will not be my fault; and you shall find I will not act booty for myself. If I have any kind of success at this right end, I will then beg to use the favor of your interest in your cousin, as I shall then mention to you: but instead of setting me off for other things, I would most earnestly beg that you would speak only of your long and thorough knowledge of me, and, if you think it true, of my good temper, honesty, love of my relations and country, sobriety, and virtue. For these, I hope, I may stand to, as far as I am possessed of them. They will not, I hope, grow worse as I grow older. For though I can promise little of my regimen, by which I hold my health; I am persuaded to think no vices will grow upon me, as I manage myself: for in this I have been ever sincere, to make myself as good as I was able, and to live for no other end.

I am ashamed to have writ such a long letter about myself, as if I had no concern for the public; though I may truly say to you, if I had not the public in view, I should hardly have these thoughts of changing my condition at this time of day, that I can better indulge myself in the ease of a single and private life. The weather, which is so unfortunate for me by these settled east winds, keeps the country dry; and if they are the same, as is likely,



in Flanders, I hope ere this Lisle is ours, which has cost us so dear, and held us in such terrible anxiety.

I have been to see Lord Treasurer that little while he was in town, but could not find him.

Pray let me hear in your next, what time you think of coming up<sup>2</sup>. I shall be glad to hear soon from you again; wishing you delight and good success in your country-affairs, and all happiness and prosperity to your family. I remain,

*Dear S I R,*

*Your obliged friend, and  
faithful humble servant,*

S H A F T E S B U R Y.

Sir John Cropley, with whom I am here, presents his humble service to you.

### L E T T E R III.

*Dear Sir, Beachworth in Surrey, Oct. 23. 1708.*

**Y**OU guessed right as to the winds, which are still easterly, and keep me here in winter-quarters, from all public and private affairs. I have neither seen Lord Treasurer, nor been at Chelsea<sup>1</sup>, to prosecute my own affairs; though as for the latter,

<sup>2</sup> From *Edlington*, a seat the Lord *Molesworth* has in *Yorkshire*.

<sup>1</sup> He had a pretty retreat at *Little Chelsea*, which he fitted up according to his own fancy.



as great as my zeal is, I am forced to a stand. I was beforehand told, that as to the Lord, he was in some measure engaged: and the return I had from him, on my application, seemed to imply as much. On the other side, I have had reason to hope, that the lady, who had before bemoaned herself for being destined to greatness without virtue, had yet her choice to make; and, after her escapes, fought for nothing so much as sobriety and a strict virtuous character. How much more still this adds to my zeal, you may believe: and by all hands I have received the highest character of your relation, who seems to have inspired her with these and other good sentiments, so rare in her sex and degree. My misfortune is, I have no friend in the world by whom I can in the least engage, or have access to your relation, but only by yourself: and I have no hopes of seeing you soon, or of your having an opportunity to speak of me to her. If a letter could be proper, I should fancy it more so at this time than any other; provided you would found it on the common report which is abroad, of my being in treaty for that lady. This might give you an occasion of speaking of me as to that part which few besides can know so well, I mean my heart; which, if she be such as really all people allow, will not displease her to hear so well of, as, perhaps in friendship, and from old acquaintance, you may represent. If the person talked of be really my rival, and in favor with the father, I must own my case is next to desperate; not only because I truly think him, as the world goes, likely



enough to make a good, at least a civil, husband; but because as my aim is not fortune, and his is, he being an old friend, too, I should unwillingly stand between him and an estate, which his liberality has hitherto hindered him from gaining, as great as his advantages have been hitherto in the government. By what I have said, I believe you may guess who my supposed rival is<sup>2</sup>: or, if you want a farther hint, it is one of the chief of the junto, an old friend of yours and mine, whom we long sat with in the house of Commons, not often voted with, but who was afterwards taken up to a higher house; and is as much noted for wit, and gallantry, and magnificence, as for his eloquence and courtier's character. But whether this be so suited to this meek, good lady's happiness, I know not. Fear of partiality and self-love makes me not dare determine; but rather mistrust myself, and turn the balance against me. Pray keep this secret, for I got it by chance: and if there be any thing in it, it is a great secret between the two lords themselves. But sometimes I fancy it is a nail which will hardly go; though I am pretty certain, it has been aimed at by this old acquaintance of ours, ever since a disappointment happened from a great lord beyond sea, who was to have had the lady.

Nothing but the sincere friendship you show for me, could make me to continue thus to impart my privatest affairs: and in reality, though they seem

<sup>2</sup> *Charles Montague, late Earl of Halifax.*



wholly private and selfish, I will not be ashamed to own the honesty of my heart to you, in professing, that the public has much the greatest part in all this bustle I am engaging in. You have lately made me believe, and even proved too by experience, that I had some interest in the world; and there where I least dreamed of it, with great men in power. I had always something of an interest in my country, and with the plain, honest people: and sometimes I have experienced, both here at home, and abroad, where I have long lived, and made acquaintance, in Holland especially, that, with a plain character of honesty and disinterestedness, I have, on some occasions, and in dangerous, urgent times of the public, been able to do some good. If the increase of my fortune be the least motive in this affair before me, as sincerely I do not find, I will venture to say, it can only be in respect of the increase of my interest, which I may have in my country, in order to serve it.

One who has little notion of magnificence, and less of pleasure and luxury, has not that need of riches which others have. And one who prefers tranquillity, and a little study, and a few friends, to all other advantages of life, and all the flatteries of ambition and fame, is not like to be naturally so very fond of engaging in the circumstances of marriage. I do not go swimmingly to it, I assure you: nor is the great fortune a great bait. Sorry I am, that no body with a less fortune, or more daughters, has had the wit to order such an education. A very moderate fortune had served my turn; or



perhaps quality alone, to have a little justified me, and kept me in countenance, had I chose so humbly. But now that which is rich ore, and would have been the most estimable, had it been bestowed on me, will be mere dross, and flung away on others, who will pity and despise those very advantages which I prize so much. But this is one of the common places of exclamation, against the distribution of things in this world: and, upon my word, whoever brought up the proverb, it is no advantageous one for a providence, to say, Matches are made in heaven. I believe rather in favor of Providence, that there is nothing which is so merely fortune, and more committed to the power of blind chance. So I must be contented, and repine the less at my lot, if I am disappointed in such an affair. If I satisfy my friends, that I am not wanting to myself, it is sufficient. I am sure you know it, by the sound experience of all this trouble I have given, and am still like to give you. Though I confess myself, yet even in this too I do but answer friendship, as being so sincerely and affectionately

*Your most faithful friend,*  
*and humble servant,*  
SHAFTESBURY.



## L E T T E R IV.

*Dear SIR,**Beachworth, Nov. 4. 1708.*

I Was at Chelsea, when I received yours with the inclosed, and was so busied in the employment you had given me, by your encouragement and kind assistance in a certain affair, that I have let pass two posts without returning you thanks, for the greatest marks of your friendship that any one can possibly receive. Indeed I might well be ashamed to receive them in one sense; since the character you have given of me, is so far beyond what I dare think suitable<sup>1</sup>: though, in these cases, one may better perhaps give way to vanity than in any other. But though friendship has made you overfavorable, there is one truth, however, which your letter plainly carries with it, and must do me service. It shows that I have a real and passionate friend in you: and to have deserved such a friendship, must be believed some sort of merit. I do not say this, as aiming at a fine speech: but, in reality, where one sees so little friendship, and of so short continuance, as commonly in mankind, it must be, one would think, even in the sex's eye, a pledge of constancy, fidelity, and other merit, to have been able to engage and preserve so lasting and firm a friendship with a man of

<sup>1</sup> This relates to a letter the Lord *Molesworth* had written in his favor.



worth. So that you see, I can find a way to reconcile myself to all you have said in favor of me, allowing it to have been spoken in passion; and in this respect the more engaging with the sex, who are as good or better judges than we ourselves, of the sincerity of affection.

But in the midst of my courtship came an east-wind, and with the town-smoke did my business, or at least would have done it effectually, had I not fled hither with what breath I had left. Indeed I could have almost laughed at my own misfortune: there is something so odd in my fortune and constitution. You may think me melancholy, if you will. I own there was a time in public affairs when I really was: for, saving yourself, and perhaps one or two more, (I speak the most), I had none that acted, with me, against the injustice and corruption of both parties: each of them inflamed against me, particularly one, because of my birth and principles; the other, because of my pretended apostasy, which was only adhering to those principles on which their party was founded. There have been apostates indeed since that time. But the days are long since past, that you and I were treated as Jacobites<sup>2</sup>. What to say for some companions of ours, as they are now changed<sup>3</sup>, I know not: but as to my own

<sup>2</sup> The truly apostate *Whigs*, who became servile and arbitrary to please court-empirics, branded all those as *Jacobites*, who adhered to those very principles that occasioned and justified the revolution

<sup>3</sup> Here he means some who voted with him in his favorite bills, and who were originally *Whigs*; but, out of pique and



particular, I assure you, that since those sad days of the public, which might have helped on perhaps with that melancholy or spleen which you fear in me, and for certain have helped me to this ill state of health; I am now, however, as free as possible: and even in respect to my health too, excepting only the air of London, I am, humanly speaking, very passable: but gallantly speaking, and as a courtier of the fair sex, God knows I may be very far from passing. And I have that sort of stubbornness and wilfulness, (if that be spleen), that I cannot bear to set a better face on the matter than it deserves; so I am like to be an ill courtier, for the same reason that I am an ill jockey. It is impossible for me to conceal my horse's imperfections or my own, where I mean to dispose of either. I think it unfair: so that could any quack, by a peculiar medicine, set me up for a month or two, enough to go through with my courtship, I would not accept of his offer, unless I could miraculously be made whole. Now for a country-health, and a town-neighbourhood, I am sound and well: but for a town-life, whether it be for business or diversion, it is out of my compass.

I say all this, that you may know my true state, and how desperate a man you serve, and in how desperate a case. Should any thing come of it, the friendship will appear the greater: or if nothing, the friendship will appear the same still, as to me

disappointment, became, if not real *Jacobites*, (which was scarce possible), yet in effect as bad, by promoting all the designs peculiar to that desperate party.



myself. Your letter was delivered: I hope you will hear soon in answer to it. The old Lord continues wonderful kind to me, and I hear has lately spoken of me so to others. Our public affairs at home will be much changed, by the late death of the prince<sup>†</sup>. But I have been able to see nobody: so will not attempt to write, and will end here with the assurance of my being,

*Dear S I R,*

*Your most obliged and*

*faithful friend and servant,*

S H A F T E S B U R Y.

## L E T T E R V.

*Dear S I R,*

*Chelsea, Nov. 20. 1708.*

**I** Came hither from Surrey, but yesterday, and found your second letter; which if I had not received, I should, however, not have failed writing this post about our changes talked of, which, I hope, will be to the public advantage. As to the admiralty, and the consequences of keeping it in the administration, it had lain under during the Prince's time, you knew my mind fully, as well as my opinion of this present Lord, who, I hope, may with certainty be called Lord High Admiral. It is Lord Pembroke I mean, who, with great reluctance,

<sup>†</sup> The Prince of Denmark.



at last accepts is, I believe: though he plainly said, (as I have been informed), that he was inserted only to serve a turn, and that another great Lord (the favorite of our Whig-party) was at the bottom intended, and would in some time succeed him. But I really believe things stand on a better bottom: and that, as strictly as the Lord Somers is bound to the party of friends with whom he rose, he has yet that wisdom, and withal that regard to his country's interest, especially under a ministry of which he is like to have so great a share; that, however the low Whigs may murmur, he will be glad to see the naval affairs in the hands of so universally beloved a man, so honorable and uncorrupt, as Lord Pembroke.

By this you will find, I take for granted, that Lord Somers comes into the place talked of for him, of President of the council; and believe it is true that he has kissed the Queen's hand, though not directly as a minister received: but pretty near it you may believe: since at this time of mourning (and so sincere a mourner as the Queen is) she hardly would see a stranger, and, which is more, a man so estranged from her, and so wholly off from the court, as Lord Somers has been, and whom I scarce believe she has admitted at any time to kiss her hand; he having been for certain the Prince's aversion, as you may judge by those who chiefly influenced the Prince, and were the violentest enemies Lord Somers had. I must confess I ever wished well to this correspondence there now is



between Lord Somers and our Lord<sup>1</sup>; but can pretend to have had no share in effecting it. With all the other lords of the junto, I have maintained only a very cool and distant acquaintance: but I have ever distinguished Lord Somers, and believe so well both of our Lord and him, that the union between them is upon a handsomer and better bottom, than that of giving up their particular friends on either side; and even Lord Pembroke, a Tory, on whom all this turns, is a proof, I think, that this change is not wholly a party-matter.

Lord Wharton indeed is true steel: but as little partiality as I have for him, and as ill an opinion of his private life and principles, I fancy his good understanding will make him show himself a better Lord Lieutenant than is expected. More changes I know not of: nor do I believe many are to be expected.

Forgive this hasty sheet I here inclose to you. It is late, and I shall miss this night's post sending hence to town: so add only my constant and sincere profession of being,

*Dear S I R,*

*Your obliged friend, and*

*faithful humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

<sup>1</sup> The Lord Treasurer.



## L E T T E R VI.

*Dear SIR, Beachworth, Nov. 25. 1708.*

I Should be very sorry if you missed mine, of last post but one, from Chelsea, in which I writ you my whole thoughts of the changes.

The parliament has now sat, and for the first trying question we have lost the ballot, though but by nine. Our friends stuck fast. But kindness to this ministry, which the best men are willing to favor, made the struggle not so great as might be. Sir Peter King, our friend, spoke worthily for it. Sir Joseph Jekyl, and all those did as before, and went on our side. The late speaker beset the new one<sup>1</sup>; and he will have I fear a hard task, if this be not an easy session, as our great news and glorious success abroad is like to make it.

As for myself and private affairs, (with which I did not trouble you in my last long one), you may judge by the place where I am, that they go not on very smartly. Making court any where, or in any sense, I find is not among my talents, if I have any. I have done more in this affair than I thought it possible for me to have done, having so great an opinion, as I still have, of the lady. But it is hard, even for us men, to know ourselves; harder for women, however wise. She may like a younger

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Onslow, since created Lord Onslow.



man and a sprightlier, far better perhaps than such a one as I am. But I believe such a one will not so like or value her as I do, or in the main make her so happy; so vain I am. But whatever my thoughts are of myself, I am not used to set myself off for my interest sake, and make the best of what I have. Health I have not in the highest degree. Be it spleen, or real infirmity, it is the same misfortune to a lady. Could I make a show of health with safety, and pursue the lady, where I might have opportunity to win her liking by this means, and appearing better without doors than I am within at ordinary hours; I would not do this, whatever depended on it. But as the season is, and the severe north-east winds, and town-smoke, I am driven from my quarters at Chelsea; and think not that I shall be able to return there till the strength of the winter is over: so will take the first fair weather to go to my winter-quarter at St Giles's<sup>2</sup>. A thousand thanks to you for your kind concern in an affair which I have taken so much to heart. Your writing again in answer, as you did the first post, was mighty right, to me extremely obliging. If I see the least glimmering of hope, you shall be sure to know.

I have given order at Chelsea about the vines.  
Adieu. Dear Sir, I am

*Most faithfully yours,*

SHAFTESBURY.

<sup>2</sup> His paternal seat in *Dorsetshire*, which he used highly to commend; and indeed I have heard it as much admired by others.



Sir John and Mr Micklethwayt, who are both here at this instant, rejoicing with me on the good news from abroad, desire very earnestly to have their humble services presented to you.

## L E T T E R VII.

Dear SIR,

Beachworth, Jan. 6. 1708-9.

**H**AD I not by accident heard long since that you were on the road to town, you may be sure I should be employing the leisure-time I have here in writing to you; especially after such long and friendly letters as I have lately received from you on public and private subjects; and in which you are so favorable to me, as to lay a stress upon my judgment and opinion in the affairs of my country; which of late years I have been forced to look on at a distance, without any thing that can be called a share in them myself<sup>1</sup>. I must own, I began of late to flatter myself, with a way of service I little dreamed of, and which I never thought myself capable of, or qualified for heretofore<sup>2</sup>. I never thought I should see any of the great men at court so inclinable to public good, as to regard or hearken to a man who had chiefly that at heart: and, to say truth of myself, I always thought I had a stubbornness of nature, which would hinder me

<sup>1</sup> By reason of his asthma.

<sup>2</sup> Giving advice to those at the helm; of which no man was more capable, both in respect of ability and integrity.



from making a right advantage of good ministers, whenever we should come to have any such. But the being taken down very early in my life from those high imaginations I had, and those hopes of doing service in the plain way of business and parliaments, the mortification wrought so far in my advantage, that I became milder, and more tractable and in this condition you found me, when you laid hold of an opportunity, and, with a most particular mark of friendship, recommended me to a great man<sup>1</sup>, and brought me under obligation to him. The little time I have had since with him, I employed the best I could, in such advices and such offer of service as became me. Nor do I think I have been any way unfortunate, in giving the least offence; or raising that frightful idea, which courtiers are apt to have of patriots, and men of rigid virtue. I flatter myself egregiously, or I am well in his opinion, and have lost no ground. But if it be so, and as I faithfully believe, I will be sworn, there never was a more disinterested man in his station: for, if I may judge by myself, he leaves it to his friends, and those he has obliged, to be grateful, and to act for him as they fancy, and as their heart prompts them; but, for his part, he lays no burdens, nor requires any service in return.

But this, however, ought not to lessen the zeal and earnest endeavour of one who is obliged; and in a truly honest man it much increase it: and this, for his own sake, I wish he may be wise enough to

<sup>1</sup> The Lord Treasurer.



know: for I had rather such goodness of his should come from reflection, than mere natural temper and generosity; for he that can see so deep into hearts, and comprehend the mystery of honesty, (a real mystery in most courts), will never want any of those generous inclinations which make a worthy character. But the misfortune is, we honest men (if I may speak thus presumptuously of myself) are a little mysterious ourselves. There is a cloud over us, which is hard to be cleared up. The rugged paths we walk through, give us a rugged pace; and the idle, supine, illiterate creatures of a court-education, have a thousand advantages above us; and can easier borrow from our character than we from theirs, though of right there should be nothing fair or handsome in which we should come behind them. And it ought to be a shame, that a mere courtier should, for his interest-sake, be more assiduous, and better behaved in every respect, than the man who makes court for his country, and tries to profit of the good disposition of great men in power. Our friend Horace found the difficulty and weight of this, in the case of an honest man, who loved his great friend \*, but scorned to be a slave.

*Scurrantis speciem præbere, professus amicum* \*;

And therefore (with a sigh, to be sure) he says,

*Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,  
Expertus metuit* \*. ———

\* Mæcenas.

\* lib. 1. epist. 18. v. 2.

\* Ibid. v. 86.



But we have a better cause than Horace, or his friend Lollius, whom he writes to; and therefore should strive to do more. They had only themselves to serve, but we our country and mankind. And there was a great difference between those ministers whom they courted, and the minister our friend: for their ministry was the inflaving of their country, and the world; this ministry is the very delivering of both, and the foundation of a nobler structure of liberty (by a just balance of power at home and abroad) than ever was yet laid by mankind. They are in so good a way, they can scarce miscarry. Nor can they fail of reward in the just esteem and gratitude of the public, if they are not most unhappily wanting to themselves in their private friendships. But if, trusting to their public merit, or to their interest in their prince, they either make no friends, or such as have not courage and wisdom, their enemies will find advantages against them in any state of affairs.

As our present affairs stand, I am sure a minister has need to be fortified with good friends, and honest advisers. He ought to know how he stands with the public; how every action and step is construed; and what the people think of matters, before the proof comes in a parliament. It is my opinion, that a peace is not so near as it may seem. I know the hard circumstances the Dutch lie under, will make them press for the first terms that seem any way advantageous. But matters are not at present to be transacted by a whisper between two gentlemen of the blade; and others must have the



secret communicated to them, besides a Monsieur Bouffleurs or Milor Portland<sup>7</sup>: so great a change has happened since that last peace, both in the government of England, as well as Holland! and a chancellor here apprehends another sort of duty, as well as a pensioner there, thanks to the Tory gentlemen for this their notable furtherance of the prerogative. For I was one of those sorrowful Whigs who bemoaned the sad case of our constitution, according to which the power of peace and war was wholly in the prince; whilst the Tories saw plainly that it was otherwise, and could impeach a Lord Chancellor<sup>8</sup> for placing the seal, where I sincerely thought he could not refuse to do it at his prince's command. But let lord chancellors, and other ministers, look to themselves. If our constitution was not so then, it is become so now: for not the absolute command, the obstinacy, the rashness, or ill judgment of the prince himself, (though ever so much a principal in the case, or though single, or by himself), can justify or excuse the least flaw in a treaty; for which the ministers are with their heads to be answerable to the people, as by late precedents it has been

<sup>7</sup> These made the famous *partition-treaty*, which was so ill relished in *England*, and rejected by the parliament. For a while it was kept very secret; which circumstance alone is a just presumption, that a treaty is not for the advantage or honor of the nation.

<sup>8</sup> Lord *Somers*. Lord *Portland* was also impeached; as were at the same time the Lords *Orford* and *Halifax*.



established. These difficulties may easily show a wise minister, that he has need of very discerning, bold, and honest friends; and such as are not only able by their advice to assist him, but, by their interest and credit, be as it were hostages and pledges for him to the public, and to that concealed party of sober and honest men: who, as few as they are, and as little noisy, have a much greater part in the influence of affairs, than ministers are apt to think; especially those ministers who affect a high contempt of coffeehouses and pamphlets. But it is time to end my scrawl, and tell you the chief reason of it over leaf.

I have been shamefully tedious about public affairs, but will be shorter about private; after only asking, How comes it you are not in parliament? For your own sake perhaps I am not so much concerned; for I know too well what hardships lie upon one who will not be a slave to a party; and such men should be rather reserved for the most hazardous and calamitous times, when public necessity and common danger make their merits and opinion better regarded<sup>9</sup>. But, for a good Lord's<sup>10</sup> sake, I am sorry you are not there: for though you may serve him less invidiously, and with more satisfaction perhaps to himself, in another station; yet he wants those in such a

<sup>9</sup> He does not mean their care should be in prosecuting, which often proves a worse remedy than the disease; but by considering the contents of them, and thereby judging of the sentiments of the people, or at least of some party among them.

<sup>10</sup> Lord Treasurer.



body as the house of Commons, who are friends to his ministry, and yet free to act for those they represent. This I know may be shocking in many cases: and if it be so, and the difficulty be invincible, I congratulate your escape; but condole with another person the want of a more truly refined policy, than I see is understood at court.

As for my affair, it hangs just as it did. The more I learn from all hands, the more I see, and hear, and observe, the more I incline, but hope less: for if I had not fears that I am wholly disregarded on the side of another sex, I am confident I could go further in prevailing, and should have better interest in our own, than any other. I have this reason, that, besides a declaration in my favor, with a liking of my character, family, circumstances, with the profession of a sincere friendship, which has been of long standing, and all other commendations and professions that I could modestly wish or desire; besides all this, I say, I have a merit that no body else will rival me in, for I would be glad of obtaining upon any terms: and that which is so hard to be parted with, is what I seek not either now, or in reversion. And let this be a token to you, that I am not cool or indifferent, as you suspect and reproach me in one of your letters. I would with all my soul engage myself this moment to the person, (were I but liked), with a renunciation of every thing of interest or fortune, either present or to come; and if I lose the person even thus, I shall



esteem it a loss : and whenever I shall think of engaging elsewhere, (if this be lost to me), I shall show that money is not so mighty a thing in my esteem, that it should seem incredible for me to pursue in such a disinterested manner.

But surely you will not think this so strange in me, that I should value virtue so much, and wealth so little. And now that I have spent a whole page upon myself, (contrary to my promise), committing myself and my affair wholly to you, and resolving to take your judgment on it, I wait your advices ; and remain, dear Sir,

*Your most obliged  
and ever faithful friend  
and humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

If you direct to me to Sir John's here at Beachworth in Surrey, by Darking-bag, the post will bring your letter quick ; but if any thing of great importance, a servant of mine shall come away at any time from Chelsea, to bring what you have to communicate : or perhaps Mr Micklethwayt, who is often coming hither, (generally once a-week), may be the conveyor ; at least he will send it to Chelsea, or see it safe conveyed, if you direct him.



## L E T T E R VIII.

*Dear SIR,      Beachworth, Jan. 12. 1708-9.*

**T**HAT you might not be in pain on my account, I took the resolution, as soon as I had read yours, to send an answer away with the soonest, without waiting the return of the post. So this, which is writ late to-night, will, I hope, come to you to-morrow evening by the penny-post, since it is to be in town before noon. And glad one is of any opportunity of a messenger, such as go by necessity on their own business, and on foot: for our servants and horses cannot stir out of this bottom, where we are blocked up by the deep snows: and, what is worse, the melted snow now turned again by the frost into a crufted ice.

I was already on my journey to the west, with my face (in the Jewish phrase) towards St Giles's; but now I am a sojourner here of necessity. I can neither go backward nor forward; nor could I, though I were a robust man: but as a tender one, I know not what will become of me, or my affairs. For no body's affairs ever required their presence more than mine do at this time, and have done this good while in the country.

But now, as to what you write to me of your being in concern for on my account, you need



fear no resentment or reproach from me on that score. I have that entire dependence on my friend, that I can always commit my affairs and secrets to him as plenipotentiary ; and where I have once given my heart, ( allow a lover to speak in lover's language ), I can easily intrust my interest. You have long had my heart, even before I knew you personally. For the holy and truly pious man, who revealed the greatest of mysteries ; he, who, with a truly generous love to mankind and his country, pointed out the state of Denmark to other states, and prophesied of the things highliest important to the growing age : he, I say, had already gained me as his sworn friend, before he was so kind as to make friendship reciprocal, by his acquaintance and expressed esteem. So that you may believe it no extraordinary transition in me, from making you in truth my oracle in public affairs, to make you a thorough confidant in my private. All, therefore, that I am concerned for, in this bold attempt of yours, is for your own sake ; lest your partiality to me should have made you too forward in showing what was not so worthy of being seen as you imagine, and people are apt to think such things are from design. For my own part, I could not but wonder with myself a great while, ( for I could with difficulty recollect ), what kind of a letter I had writ you : and it is really a solemn law, which I impose on myself in respect of my near friends, never to write but with the freedom, hastiness, and incorrectness of common talk ; that they may have all as it comes uppermost. As for this, I can



appeal to my late letters, and all that I have writ you on my love-subject: for I am confident, I never so much as read over one that I wrote to you on that head. But be it as it will, if what happened was but natural, (and of that you are best judge), I am satisfied; and hope it may prove for the best, as you seem so positively to assure. And for the other part, my love-affair, using the same good judgment you have in this as well as in the other, do as you judge best. I leave all to you: only should be sorry that you ran the least hazard, in going too far out of doors this weather. And therefore beg that your zeal for me would not push you to what would be a real trouble for me to hear. Take your time, use your own way; act for me with full power, and report your judgment.

If I have that interest you intimate in a great man<sup>1</sup>, I assure you, as well for the public's sake, as for my own, (in real love and obligation to him), I will not indulge myself in any respect; but be a courtier to my utmost, and see him often at St James's, Kensington, Windsor, or wherever he is. Only my health will not bear with any kind of attendance in winter-time, when I am forced to attend upon myself; and by that care, and sparing of myself, have recovered (when by nothing else I could) out of the most languishing condition for three or four years: for which I have endured (and must endure it seems, because of the singu-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Treasurer.



larity of my distemper) the judgment of the world, as one fantastical and splenetic. But my near friends, those of all hours, and that see me in all circumstances, can best witness for me as to that: though perhaps, now they are for advancing me in matrimony, they may magnify my bodily estate, at the hazard of that of my mind, which is less (they think) a fair lady's concern. But I like not the stratagem, and desire to appear in truth what I am; only if I am more careful of my health against the time of such an engagement, I may be the more excused: and indeed it is but, after all, what is necessary to preserve me, if I am worth preserving for any good I can do the public, or my friends. Never any one could more justly ask that leave, which you yourself ask of me,

<sup>2</sup> ——— *Ægrotare timentis*, &c.

And therefore I hope, as soon as the hardest of the winter has spent itself, (which is spending apace), I shall return,

*Cum zephyris, si concedes, et hirundine prima*<sup>3</sup>.

Forgive this habit of long letters, which you have encouraged. I rest

*Faithfully yours,*

SHAFTESBURY.

<sup>2</sup> Hor. l. 1. ep. 7. v. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Hor. lib. 1. ep. 7. v. 13.



## L E T T E R IX.

*Dear SIR, St Giles's, Feb. 21. 1708-9.*

**H**OW shall I sufficiently acknowledge the kind services you have lately done me? You may well say indeed, that you love not to do things by halves. I am sure you are an entire friend; and I am not surpris'd to find you so: for when my acquaintance with you was only upon public affairs, I never found you a half-patriot. We were then fellow-sufferers, for being so wholly what we pretended: and the world, I believe, has made us but little amends since. It is pleasant to imagine, that if we have met with better fortune, it has been by means of one another. Would I could make it indeed thoroughly reciprocal! for, on my side, I may truly say, that the first turning of the stream, which had run against me, was by your hand; and in the most desperate case, (which was the injury I received in an injured friend), you instantly set all right: and what I had with pain, and trouble, and all manner of ill usage, been soliciting for many years, you accomplished for me in a few weeks, and gave me my first friend at court. After this miracle, I have had faith enough to think you might do any thing. Indeed I did not think you could have conquered snows and frosts, and have braved the hardest winter-weather. Yet it was in this season that you made such a successful sally for me, and gave me so good an account



of my affairs, which I was almost come to think wholly desperate.

But your short and long letter, (which have both come safe to me), as well as the account received from my friends the post before, give me new hopes. I wish I could answer as well in the matter of my health, as I can in all other respects, where you have kindly been undertaker and guarantee for me. If I am more careful of my health now than before, it is because I have this occasion; and that the more than ordinary care I have had of it of late, has succeeded so well with me. This I am sure of, that I am so far from being averse to live in the world, and to have a share in the converse and affairs of it; that had I a wife that was discreet and good, and capable of advice, I should, more than any one, be desirous of her being much in the world, and supplying that part for me. My bookishness has so little reason to fright any one, that if I had ever been of a temper to love books better than the conversation of my friends and relations, I am now really necessitated to lay them by; for no body wants little amusements more than I do. And though, on account of my mind, I could boast perhaps, that, in the greatest solitude, I could vie with any one for ease and cheerfulness; yet, since the change that happened in my health, I am not able to apply as formerly; nor even study above an hour at a time, or hardly as much more in a whole day. And I, who had gone through the diversions and entertainment of some



courts, and foreign countries, and in the company of ladies, without ever once playing at cards, or knowing any such thing as play; I am of late become a card-player with the women, and am better qualified for chat with them, than for speeches in a parliament, or works in a study. Thus most things have their convenience and inconvenience. It is certain, that in many respects I may be said to make a better husband, now that my hands are tied, than I should have done, if I had been left to act to the utmost of my strength in politics. There is a selfishness in the love that is paid a wife, and in the attendance on a family, and all the little affairs of it; which, had I my full scope of action in the public, I should hardly have submitted to. An honest man must certainly be the greatest happiness of an honest woman. But then there is bitter too with the sweet; for an honest man will love the public, and act honestly in the public: and if he does so, it is two to one but he is hard set, and perhaps ground between the parties; at least he will have but a solicitous life of it. He cannot so well vacare uxori as the knave: but then the knave will be a knave to her, and vacare to other women instead of her. And thus, upon a medium, I look upon myself as in reality better qualified than ever for a good husband, if it be to a truly good woman, whose chief satisfaction would be, a conversible and chearful way of living, with a man who loved and valued her, and whose chief thoughts and time would be



bestowed on her and her children , and to make her life as agreeable as could be to herself, and her part in the world as considerable.

But to come to practice after my doctrine: You may depend upon it, I will not be long ere I return again to you: and though, after a long absence, and the death of an old servant who had all my affairs here in his hands, I have found things in great disorder, I should value no loss of this kind. The weather seems now to break: and if the roads (as in a fortnight or three weeks they may be) become passable, and the weather tolerable, I will soon come and make my second attempt, with all the strength of friends that I can make on my side. And if I can but have the least kind help from within the place, we may be able to carry it.

It is a sad case for such a one as I am, to hang in suspense in an affair of this kind, where I am so passionately engaged. I find it worse perhaps than another, because I am so used to have my head free for public affairs, and thoughts of a larger kind. But I protest, though I have twenty things to say to you about the public, I cannot come out with one. Forgive me I beg you, and place it to the account of that zeal I have in an affair you have thus forwarded, and is in your hands; as is entirely

*Your obliged friend,*

SHAFTESBURY.



## L E T T E R X.

*Dear SIR,**St. Giles, March. 7. 1708-9.*

**I** Should indeed have been concerned very much at your silence, had I not known of your health, by your friends and mine, with whom you lately dined. I feared your constitution would suffer by this extremity of weather we have had. The town-smoke, I think, is no addition to this evil in your respect; but with me it would have been destruction. The happiness of a most healthy and warm, as well as a pleasant situation, where I am, and which I may really praise beyond any I have known in England, has preserved me in better health this winter, than I could have imagined. And I design to profit of the stock I have laid up, and come soon where I may have the happiness of conversing with you. But now you have led me into the talk of friendship, and have so kindly expostulated with me about my thanks, let me, in my turn, expostulate too about your excuses for your letters, or even for your omission. I well know you would not forget me, were there any thing that friendship required. For the rest, friendship requires that we should be easy, and make each other so. It is an injustice to a real friend, to deny one's self the being lazy, when one has a mind to it. I have professed to you, that I take that liberty myself, and would



use it if there were occasion. But, besides other inequalities that are between us, over and above those you reckoned up, consider, that, together with my full leisure and retreat here in the country, (by which means I have choice of hours to write when I fancy), I have also a secret and private interest that pushes me forward to be writing to you, as often and as much as I can. I am ashamed things should stand so unequally between us: for you have not yet had a fair trial, what a correspondent I should prove upon equal terms; nor can I impute a single letter of mine to mere friendship. But I am more ashamed still, when I, who should make excuses, am forced to receive them. See if you are not over-generous! for any one, besides yourself, would be apt to use a little raillery with a man in my circumstances, that had such an affair depending, and wholly in your hands. But I find you have too much gallantry, as well as friendship, to take the least advantage of a lover; and are willing to place more to the account of friendship, than I can suffer without blushing. However, be secure of this, that when you take intentions instead of facts, you can never impute more to me in the way of friendship than I really deserve. And if I have not yet had the occasion of proving myself as I would do to you in this respect, I am satisfied, if the occasion offered, you would not find me remiss. In the mean time, pray use me with more indulgence; and show me that you can use me as a friend, by writing only when you have a fancy,



and no more than you have a fancy for. You cannot imagine what a favor I should take it, to receive a shorter and a worse letter from you, than you would write perhaps to any friend you had in the world besides. It is a law I set myself with my near and intimate friends, to write in every humor, or neglect writing as I fancy: and from this settled negligence I grow a right correspondent, and write when I scarce think of it, by making thus free with those I write to. If you will take my humor as it runs, you shall have hearty thanks too into the bargain, for taking it off at this rate. Let me but have a small scrap or scrawl, (three or four sizes below the first of your letters, after the late conference), and I shall think myself not only favorably, but kindly and friendly dealt with.

*Nardi parvus onyx eliciet cadum*<sup>1</sup>.

The truth is, I long for another such precious scrap, as I had after your first attempt for me; that if you are as successful in a second, and find that your good advice has made impression, and that there be a real foundation of hope, I may come up quickly to make my second attempt upon my old friend.

Your story of friendship could not but delight me, it being one of my darling pieces<sup>2</sup>; especially

<sup>1</sup> Hor. lib. 4. od. 12. v. 17.

<sup>2</sup> This story, which is well worth perusing, is in *Lucian's Toxaris*, or *discourse of friendship*.



being in an author, who, though he perpetually does all he can, to turn all morality and virtue into ridicule, is yet forced to pay this, and one or two more remarkable tributes of acknowledgement, to the principle of society and friendship, which is the real principle of life; the end of life, and not (as some philosophers would have it) the means. Horace, in his wild days, was of another opinion: but when he came, in a riper age, to state the question.

*Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumve trahat nos?*<sup>3</sup>

he always gives it for the latter; and would not allow virtue to be a mere name. Let who will despise friendship, or deny a social principle; they will, if they are any thing ingenuous, be urged one time or another to confess the power of it; and if they enjoy it not themselves, will admire or envy it in others. And when they have inverted the whole matter of life, and made friendships, and acquaintances, and alliances, serve only as a means to the great and sole end of interest; they will find, by certain tokens within their own breasts, that they are short of their true and real interests of life; for this is in reality,

*Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

Your judgment too, of the first of the parts in

<sup>3</sup> Hor. l. 4. od. 12. v. 75.



the story of friendship, is, in my opinion, perfectly just. My natural ambition in friendship, made me wish to be the poor man rather of the two; though, since I have lately had to deal with a rich one, I have wished often to change parts; and keeping the wealth I have, would fain have my old friend to be heartily poor, and accordingly make an experiment of me by such a legacy. But I am afraid he hardly thinks me capable of accepting of it; or if he did, I know not whether he would think the more favorably of me. Mine is a hard case indeed, when I am on one side obliged to act so disinterested a part; and yet must be careful on the other side, lest, for not loving money, I should be thought an ill son-in-law, and unfit to be intrusted with any thing. Thus you see I mix love and philosophy: and so I should politics and public affairs with private, if my place at this time was not the country, and yours the town. However, I cannot forbear entreating you to send me word, whether the proposal about Dunkirk<sup>\*</sup> was from our friend in the ministry or not? for I heard he disliked it, or seemed to do so; and for the last there may be good reason, as he is a statesman: for the former, I can see none, but am rather inclined to think, that, as a generous and true statesman, he had for many reasons (in respect of foreign and home-

<sup>\*</sup> The demolishing of its fortifications, and ruining of its harbour, which was first proposed in the unaccomplished treaties of the *Hague* and *Gerdruydenburg*, 1703.



affairs) contrived that the proposal should seem to have its rise from a popular heat, rather than from the cabinet-council, and as a deliberate thought. But if my own thought of it be fond, it is in the way of friendship still; for I could wish a friend the happiness of being author of every public good that was possible for him, and not to be a hindrance or obstruction to any.

To conclude: One word about my private affair, and I have done for this time. I beg you, when you have been your visits, and made your utmost effort to see what foundation I may hope for, you would write me a line instantly. For though I have private affairs of some consequence, that should keep me here at least a month or six weeks longer, I will despise all of that kind: and, now the roads are passable, and weather tolerable, will come up at a week's warning; if a man who loves and admires, is known, though never seen, can possibly be favored, or thought to deserve. For if so, the cause is nobler, and there is a better foundation for acting boldly. Adieu. Adieu.

## L E T T E R XL

*Dear SIR,**Beachworth, June 3. 1709.*

**I**T is now long since I had fixed my thoughts on nothing but the happiness of seeing you, and profiting of those advantages which the perfectest



friendship, with the greatest address, and indefatigable pains, had compassed in my behalf. There was nothing I might not have hoped from such a foundation as you had laid: and all the enchantments in the world could not have held proof, had my sad fate allowed me but to have followed my guide, and executed what my general had so ably designed. But not a star but has been my enemy. I had hardly got over the unnatural winter, but, with all the zeal imaginable, I dispatched my affairs, and came up from the west, thinking to surprise you by a visit. The hurry I came away in, and the fatigue of more than ordinary business I was forced to dispatch that very morning I set out, joined with the ill weather which returned again upon my journey, threw me into one of my ill fits of the asthma, and almost killed me on the road. After a few weeks I got this over, and my hopes revived: and last week I went to Chelsea, paid my visit next day to the old man, found him not at home, resolved to redouble my visits, and once more endeavour to move him. But the winds returned to their old quarter; I had London-smoke on me for a day or two; grew extremely ill with it; and was forced to retire hither, where I have but just recovered breath.

What shall I do in such a case? To trouble you further, I am ashamed; ashamed too, that I should have pushed such an affair, to which my strength was so little suitable: and yet ashamed to desist, after what I have done, and the vast



trouble I have put you to. But Fortune has at length taught me that lesson of philosophy, to know myself, my constitution I mean: for my mind (in this respect at least) I know full well. And I wish in all other things I could be as unerring and perfect, as I have been in this affair; in which I am certain no ambition, or thought of interest, has had any part: though it may look as if all my aim had been fortune, and not the person and character of the lady, as I have pretended. But in this I dare almost say with assurance, you know my heart. Whether the lady does, or ever will, God knows: for I have scarce the heart left to tell it her, had I the opportunity.

So much for my sad fortune.

I hope, however, to be at Chelsea again in a few days, and I long for the happiness of seeing you there: for I have no hopes of being able to wait on you at your lodgings.

If the Queen goes soon to Windsor, I hope soon to see the great man, our friend; whom I can easier visit there, than at St. James's. He has been so kind to inquire after me with particular favor, and has sent me a kind message in relation to public affairs. I am,

*Dear SIR,*

*Your most obliged friend,*

*and faithful, humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.



## L E T T E R XII.

*My dear friend,**Chelsea, June 15. 1709.*

I Was this day to wait again on my old Lord. I found him as civil and obliging as ever. But when I came to make mention of my affair, I found the subject was uneasy to him. I did but take occasion, when he spoke in praise of my little house and study, to tell him I built it in a different view from what his Lordship knew me to have of late: for I had then (I told him) no thoughts beyond a single life. I would have added, that since I was unhappy in my first offer, and had turned my thoughts as I had lately done, when I flattered myself in the hopes of his favor, I could no longer enjoy the place or his neighbourhood, with the satisfaction I had done before. — But I found he was deaf on this ear. He seemed to express all the uneasiness that could be, and I could go no further. I see there is no hope left for me. If he thought any one sincere, I believe I might be as likely as any one to be trusted by him. But I am afraid he thinks but the worse of me, for pretending to value his daughter as I do; and for protesting, that I would be glad to take her without a farthing, present or future; and yet settle all I have, as I have offered him. He will not easily find such a friend and son-in-law; one that has such a regard for him and his.



But so it must be. He may suffer perhaps as well as I. There is no help for this, when men are too crafty to see plain; and too interested, to see their real friends and interest. I shall soon show my sincerity in one respect, if I live: for since I cannot have the woman I have seen and liked, I may determine perhaps on one I have never seen; and take a lady for a character only without a fortune, (which I want not), since you and other friends are so kindly importunate, and pressing, on this concern of mine.

But of this more when I see you next, with a thousand acknowledgments and thanks, for the thorough friendship you have shown; and what is so truly friendship, that I almost think I injure it, when I speak of thanks and acknowledgments.

You will have me take all of this kind in another manner: and therefore, on the same foot, I expect you should take all that I have done or ever can do, without ceremony, and as

*Your faithful friend,  
and humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

### L E T T E R XIII.

*My dear friend,      Beachworth, July 19. 1709.*

I Can hardly be reconciled to you, for saying so much as you have done, to express your concern



for the disappointment of my grand affair. I am not so ill a friend, nor have lived so little in the world, as not to know by experience, that a disappointment in a friend's concern, is often of more trouble to one, than in one's own. And I was so satisfied this was your case, that I was willing to diminish the loss, and make as slight of it as possible; the better to comfort you, and prevent your being too much concerned at what had happened. As to the fortune, I might sincerely have done it; but as to the lady, I own the loss is great enough: for, besides her character and education, she was the first I turned my thoughts upon, after the promise you had drawn from me the year before; when you joined with some friends of mine; in kindly pressing me to think of the continuance of a family. Methinks now I might be acquitted, after this attempt I have made. But you have taken occasion, from the ill success of it, to prove how much more still you are my friend, in desiring to make the most of me, while I live, and keep what you can of me for memory-sake afterwards. This is the kindest part in the world: and I cannot bring myself so much as to suppose a possibility of your flattering me. I have an easy faith in friendship. My friends may dispose of me as they please, when they thus lay claim to me: and whilst they find me of any use to them, or think I have any power still to serve mankind or my country, in such a sphere as is yet left for me; I can live as happy in a crazy state of health, and out of the way of pleasures and diversions, as if I enjoyed



them in the highest degree. If marriage<sup>1</sup> can be suitable to such a circumstance of life, I am content to engage. I must do my best to render it agreeable to those I engage with: and my choice, I am sensible, ought for this reason to be as you have wisely prescribed for me. I must resolve to sacrifice other advantages, to obtain what is principal and essential in my case.

What other people will say of such a match, I know not; nor what motive they will assign for it, when interest is set aside. Love, I fear, will be scarce a tolerable pretence in such a one as I am: and for a family, I have a brother still alive, whom I may have still some hopes of. What a weakness then would it be thought in me, to marry with little or no fortune, and not in the highest degree of quality neither? Will it be enough that I take a breeder out a good family, with a right education (fit for a mere wife); and with no advantages but simple innocence, modesty, and the plain qualities of a good mother, and a good nurse? This is as little the modern relish, as that old-fashioned wife of Horace's,

*Sabina qualis, aut perusta solibus  
Pernicis uxor Appuli*<sup>1</sup>.

Can you or my friends, who press me to this, bear me out in it? See, if with all the notions of virtue (which you, more than any one, have helped to

<sup>1</sup> Epod. 2. v. 41.



propagate in this age) it be possible to make such an affair pass tolerable in the world! The experiment, however, shall be made, if I live out this summer: and you shall hear me say, as the old bachelor in the Latin Menander, with a little alteration,

*Etsi hoc molestum, — alienum a vita mea  
Videtur; si vos tantopere istuc voltis, fiat*<sup>2</sup>.

You see upon what foot of friendship I treat you. Judge whether it be necessary for you hereafter to say so much in order to convince me, what a friend you are: and for my own part, I have reduced you, I am confident, to the necessity of believing me, even the most insincere of all men, or the most faithfully

*Your friend and humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

I missed our great friend, when I was last to visit him at St James's. I intend for Windsor very soon, if I am able.

## L E T T E R    XIV.

*Dear SIR, Ryegate in Surrey, Nov. 1. 1709.*

IF I have had any real joy in my new state, it was then chiefly when I received yours, that

<sup>2</sup> Terent. Adelp. act. 5. sc. 8. v. 21.



wished it me. The two or three friends, whom, besides yourself, I pretend to call by that name, were so much parties to the affair, and so near me, that their part of congratulation was in a manner anticipated. Happily you were at a good distance, and point de vue, to see right: for as little trust as I allow to the common friendship of the world, I am so presumptuous in this case of a near and intimate friend, that instead of mistrusting their affection, I am rather afraid of its rendering them too partial. The interest and part which I believe them ready to take in my concern, makes me wish them sometimes to see me, as they should do themselves, from a distance, and in a less favorable light. So that although I have had godfathers to my match, I have not been confirmed till I had your approbation: and though, thank God, I have had faith to believe myself a good Christian, without Episcopal confirmation; I should have thought myself an ill husband, and but half-married, if I had not received your concluding sentence and friendly blessing. In good earnest, for to you I am not ashamed to say it, I have for many years known no other pleasure, or interest, or satisfaction, in doing any thing, but as I thought it right, and what became me to my friends and country. Not that I think I had the less pleasure for this reason; but honesty will always be thought a melancholy thing to those who go but half-way into the reason of it; and are honest by chance, or by force of nature, not by reason and conviction. Were I to talk of marriage, and forced to speak



my mind plainly, and without the help of humor or raillery; I should doubtless offend the most part of sober, married people, and the ladies chiefly: for I should in reality think I did wonders in extolling the happiness of my new state, and the merit of my wife in particular, by saying, that I verily thought myself as happy a man now as ever. And is not that subject enough of joy! What would a man of sense wish more? For my own part, if I find any sincere joy, it is because I promised myself no other than the satisfaction of my friends; who thought my family worth preserving, and myself worth nursing in an indifferent, crazy state, to which a wife, if a real good one, is a great help. Such a one I have found: and if, by her help or care, I can regain a tolerable share of health, you may be sure it will, be employed as you desire, since my marriage itself was but a means to that end.

I have deferred three or four posts the answering yours, in expectation of reporting something to you from our great Lord, to whom I had lately sent a letter; he having before let me know, that he would soon write to me upon something of moment: but as yet I have heard nothing. Only, as oft as he sees a friend of ours, he inquires after me with particular kindness. I am now at such a convenient distance from him, whether he be a St James's, Kensington, or Windsor; that, when the weather and wind serves for me, and I am tolerably well, I can in four or five hours driving be ready to attend him. Other attendance I am



not, you know, capable of; nor can I expect such a change of health as that comes to; for sincerely it depends on that alone. As proudly as I have carried myself to other ministers, I could as willingly pass a morning waiting at his levee, as any where else in the world.

When last I was with him at Windsor, you may be sure I could not omit speaking to him of yourself. The time I had with him was much interrupted by company. I know not how my interest, on such a foot as this, is like to grow: but I am certain it shall not want any cultivating, which an honest man, and in my circumstances, can possibly bestow upon it. If he has, or comes to have any good opinion of my capacity or knowledge, he must withal regard me in the choice I make of friends. And if it happens, as fortunately as it has done, that the chief friend I have, and the first whom I consider in public affairs, was previously his own acquaintance, and proved friend; one would think, he should afterwards come to set a higher value upon him: and since he cannot have one always near him, who gladly would be so; he will oblige another, who is willing and able. And, in reality, if at this time your coming up depends only on his wish, as you tell me, and the commands he may have for you; I shall much wonder if he forgets the advantage, or thinks he can dispense with your presence at such a time.

Your character of Lord Wharton is very generous. I am glad to hear so well of him. If ever I expected any public good, where virtue was wholly



sunk, it was in his character; the most mysterious of any in my account, for this reason. But I have seen many proofs of this monstrous compound in him, of the very worst and best. A thousand kind thanks to you in my own and spouse's name, for your kind thoughts of seeing us. I add only my repeated service and good wishes, as

*Your old and faithful friend,*

*and obliged, humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.



Two LETTERS from Sir JOHN CROPLEY.

L E T T E R I.

*Dear SIR,*

**M**Y Lord Shaftesbury has desired me to make you his excuse at this time; and I am sure when I tell you what hinders him, you will be more pleased with a letter from me, than with any you have ever had from him. However, I know in a post or two he will do it himself; and tell you he is come acquainted with a person that has every qualification, but equality of fortune, to make her a suitable match. I believe no man ever had a surer prospect of his own and family's happiness. I am only concerned that so good a friend as you are not here, to be that way a partaker with myself of this; and my Lord laments it himself as much. His health, which is our best article, is become so good this weather, that he has been able to make his Windsor-journey, without hurting himself: and the good impression your friend, my Lord Treasurer, made at first on my Lord, daily increases. And I must own, since our friend has steered by our compass, and has taken this resolution at our request, and for his country's good, I wish it was as such told your friend, my Lord Treasurer; and the more, since I find my Lord Shaftesbury is desirous of cultivating always the foot they now stand on. I would not have this pass for a light act,



which in itself is so far from it<sup>3</sup>. And I must say again, the choice is so good in all respects but that one, which my Lord is very well able to dispense with, that even some Whig-friends that do not love him, whatever they pretend, for so often putting them out of countenance, and arraigning their conduct, will not be able to wound him at all: though, as a sincere friend to my Lord Shaftesbury, I must own, it is the only place I fear hurt from: and so am the more willing to put you in mind of this fence against it. If your occasions should be so pressing, to get the better of your inclinations, and keep you from doing this in the best way; yet I hope, in your corresponding with my Lord Treasurer, you will remember this by the very first opportunity. My Lord Shaftesbury is now at Beachworth. I shall be with him to-morrow; and Mr Micklethwayt, who is now here, will have me add his humble respects. I can say, no man is with greater faithfulness, gratitude, and respect, than myself,

*Dear S I R,*

*Your most humble and*

*Red-Lion Square,*

*most obedient servant,*

*16th of August.*

J. CROPLEY.

I will not pretend to give you news, but Mick says we have none. I beg my best respects and good wishes to your sons.

<sup>3</sup> Meaning Lord Shaftesbury's marriage.



## L E T T E R II.

*Dear SIR,**October 6.*

**T**HE marriage of our friend must be my excuse, for no sooner acknowledging so kind a letter as I about that time received from you. But really, as private and as little to do as there was done in it, yet it gave me more business than I expected. You must long ere this know, that his lady is a daughter of Mr Ewer of Hertfordshire, where that family have been seated ever since Henry VII.'s time. I gave you, I remember, a pretty full account of all, but her name, in my letter: so that I will only now say of it, that I believe no man ever had a wife that his own life and happiness would go on more the same, and undisturbed in all parts of it, than he has. My Lord, by going too soon unto his Ryegate-house, got a severe cold; but he is so perfectly recovered, as to be much better than I have seen him in some years past. You would now be as much rejoiced, and indeed surprised, to see the good signs of health in him, as you were concerned in seeing him last at Chelsea. The change is so great, that I do not doubt but the public too, one way or other, will have good signs of it. My Lord Treasurer has most kindly writ to congratulate him; and my Lord has writ a letter in answer, with more personal honor and esteem, than I am sure he ever writ a minister before. By the way, now I am speaking of compliments, on



this occasion I hear a certain person, at your Lord Lieutenant's \*, gave a pretty odd account of the Lady, or rather of my Lord; by saying, she was far from being young. Indeed, if that had been wanting in any match, it would have made it a sad affair. But she is but twenty. So I can not but fancy, some odd, wrong person must have been named for him; or is it not a feature of the old leaven, a breaking out of some old Whiggism, for past sins committed, that can never be forgiven? And this was more strange, to make such a deliberate act of his, and that he was so difficult to be brought to pass for a sudden rash one, when youth was also taken away. But some are so keen, and envious of characters, as to be sometimes pretty preposterous in their schemes to defame by. My Lord is now with me, and enjoins me to give you his most faithful respects and thanks for all your kind concern and good wishes. I am, with unfeigned respect and sincerity,

*Dear SIR,*

*Your most faithful, obedient,*

*bumble servant,*

**J. CROPLEY,**

\* At Lord Wharton's.



Three LETTERS of Lord SHAFTESBURY.

Taken from the *General Dictionary*.

*An extract of a letter to* THO. STRINGER<sup>s</sup>, *Esq.*

*London, Feb. 15. 1695.*

I Will not trouble you any farther now, nor indeed have I time. We have got a bill to be engrossed, which lays an incapacity on the elector, as the late passed act does on the elected, in case of corruption, meat, drink, &c. and which obliges the knights of the shire to have 500 l. a-year, or the inheritance of it, as freehold within the county, and a burghers 200 l. a-year somewhere at least in England on the same terms. You could, I believe, scarcely imagine with yourself, who these are in the world, or who they are in the house, who oppose this, and all other such bills as this, might and main; and who they are that are condemned of flying in the face of the government, as they call it, by being for such things as these are, and pressing such hard things on the prerogative or court. In short, you would hardly believe, that your poor friend, that now writes to you, has sentence, and bitter sentence too, every day passing upon him, for going, as you may be sure he goes, and ever will go on such occasions as these; what-

<sup>s</sup> A gentleman who had an office under the Lord Chancellor Shaftesbury.



ever party it be, that is in or out at court, that is in possession of the places, and afraid of losing their daily bread by not being servile enough, or that are out of places, and think by crossing the court, and siding with good and popular things against it, to get into those places of profit and management. No more. My kind service to Mrs Stringer, and my service too to your son.

*I am*

*Your sincere friend, etc.*

A. ASHLEY.

*A letter to the Earl of OXFORD.*

*My Lord,*

*Ryegate, March 29. 1711.*

THE honor you have done me in many kind inquiries after my health, and the favor you have shown me lately, in forwarding the only means I have left for my recovery, by trying the air of a warmer climate, obliges me, ere I leave England, to return your Lordship my most humble thanks and acknowledgments in this manner, since I am unable to do it in a better. I might, perhaps, my Lord, do injustice to myself, having had no opportunity of late years to pay my particular respects to you, if I should attempt any otherwise to compliment your Lordship on the late honors you have received, than by appealing to the early acquaintance and strict correspondence I had once the honor to maintain with you and your family,



for which I had been bred, almost from my infancy, to have the highest regard. Your Lordship well knows my principles and behaviour from the first hour I engaged in any public concern, and with what zeal I spent some years of my life in supporting your interest, which I thought of greater moment to the public, than my own, or family's could ever be. What the natural effects are of private friendship so founded, and what the consequence of different opinions intervening, your Lordship, who is so good a judge of men and things, can better resolve with yourself, than I can possibly suggest. And being so knowing in friends, of whom your Lordship has acquired so many, you can recollect how these ties or obligations have been hitherto preserved towards you, and whose friendships, affections, and principles you may for the future best depend upon in all circumstances and variations, public and private. For my own part, I shall say only, that I very sincerely wish you all happiness, and can with no man living congratulate more heartily on what I account real honor and prosperity. Your conduct of the public will be the just earnest and insurance of your greatness and power; and I shall then chiefly congratulate with your Lordship on your merited honors and advancement, when, by the happy effects, it appears evidently in the service of what cause, and for the advantage of what interest they were acquired and employed. Had I been to wish by what hands the public should have been served, the honor of the first part, your Lordship well knows,



had fallen to you long since. If others, from whom I least hoped, have done greatly, and as became them; I hope, if possible, you will still exceed all they have performed, and accomplish the great work so gloriously begun and carried on for the rescue of liberty, and the deliverance of Europe and mankind. And in this presumption, I cannot but remain, with the same zeal and sincerity as ever,

*My Lord, etc.*

*A letter to the Lord GODOLPHIN.*

*My Lord,*

*Ryegate, May 27. 1711.*

BEING about to attempt a journey to Italy, to try what a warmer climate, if I am able to reach it, may do towards the restoring me a little breath and life, it is impossible for me to stir hence, till I have acquitted myself of my respects, the best I can, to your Lordship, to whom alone had I but strength enough to make my compliments, and pay a day's attendance in town, I should think myself sufficiently happy in my weak state of health. I am indeed, my Lord, little able to render services of any kind; nor do I pretend to offer myself in such a capacity to any one, except your Lordship only. But could I flatter myself, that, ere I parted hence, or while I passed through France, or staid in Italy, I could any where, in the least trifle, or in the highest concern, render any manner of service to your Lordship, I should be proud of such a commission. Sure I am, in what relates



to your honor and name, if that can receive ever any advantage from such a hand as mine, your public as well as private merit will not pass unre- membered, into whatever region or climate I am transferred. No one has a more thorough know- ledge in that kind than myself, nor no one there is, who on this account has a juster right to pro- fess himself, as I shall ever do, with highest obli- gation, and most constant zeal,

*My Lord,*

*Your Lordship's most faithful*

*and most obedient, humble servant,*

SHAFTESBURY.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.











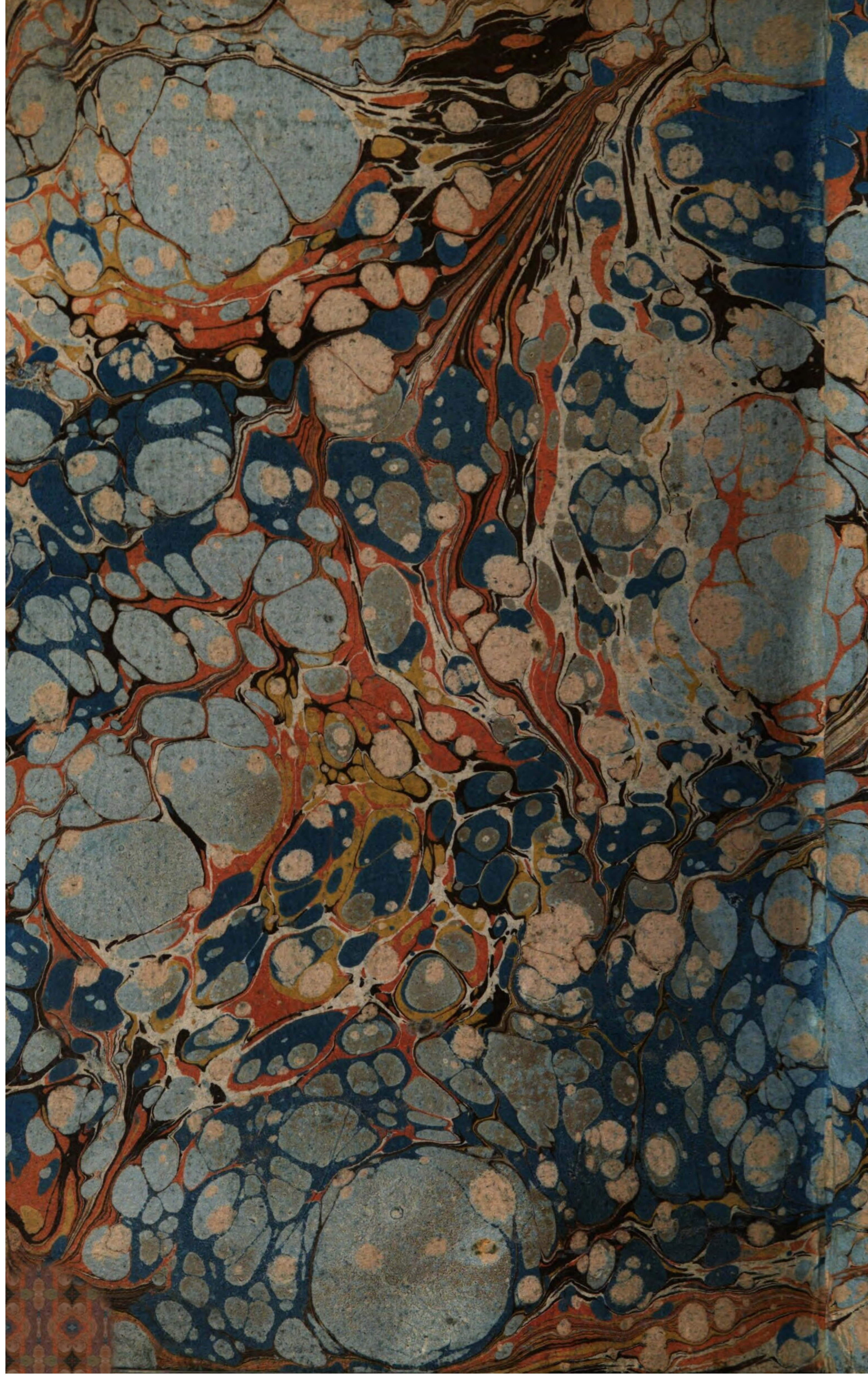


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Shottesbury







Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper <<of>>,

Characteristicks of men, manners, opinions, times with a collection of  
letters

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Basil (1790)

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